Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER & MELVIN J. LASKY

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Five Poems

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Svevo & Canetti

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Hanging Day

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Electing Kennedy

JOHN SPARROW
Reply

JORGE LUIS BORGES
THE LOTTERY
A Story

LUIGI BARZINI
Italy, North & South

KENNETH TYNAN
Tempo Fugit

IGOR STRAVINSKY
On Oedipus Rex

105
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LIFE AS WE KNOW IT DEPENDS ON MEN LIKE THIS

tell people the facts and you're halfway home

—WORKING PHILOSOPHY OF RUSSELL BEARDSWORTH

Russell Beardsworth is superintendent of Aberthaw Power Station, South Wales—one of 230 superintendents working for the Central Electricity Generating Board. He is responsible for over 400 men and for equipment worth millions of pounds: equipment that must be kept running at peak efficiency so that the cost per unit of electricity stays as low as possible.

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Naturally, a power station 'super' depends absolutely on his staff: particularly on his deputy, on his skilled electrical and mechanical engineers, his efficiency and planning officers—indeed on everyone in the station. But his responsibility extends beyond the station itself. He is the Generating Board's local representative and therefore as much concerned with preserving good relations with his neighbours as with his own staff.

Russell Beardsworth sums up: "Whenever a problem arises, I make a point of explaining the situation as fully and frankly as possible. Once you've got people sympathetic, you're halfway home".

C E G B

who make and supply electricity to 12 Area Boards in England and Wales (who re-sell to consumers) and British Railways

Write for a copy of "Pattern of Power" to the Central Electricity Generating Board (Dept. 63), Friars House, Blackfriars Road, London, S.E.1

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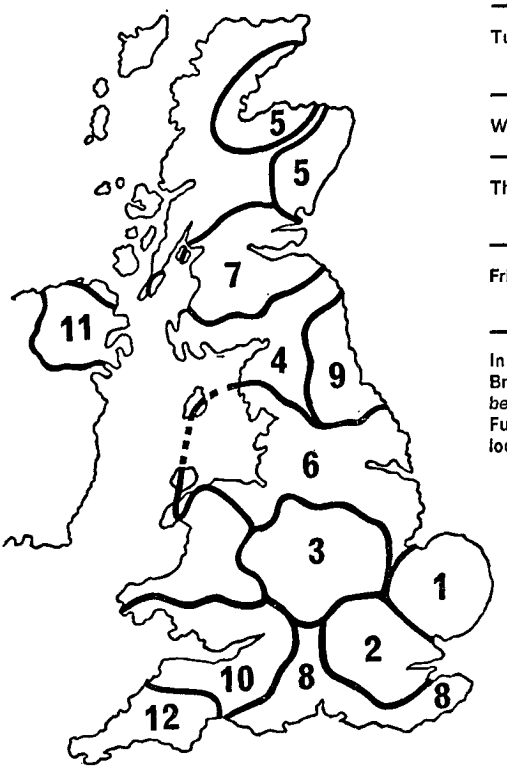
INDEPENDENT TELEVISION FOR SCHOOLS Broadcasting plans for 1962/3

The following programmes, which have been approved by the Educational Advisory Councils and Committees of Associated-Rediffusion, Associated TeleVision and Granada TV Network, will be transmitted throughout the Independent Television Network on the days and at the times shown below. The joint service provides ten series of programmes a week, which between them cover a wide range of subjects and are designed to meet the needs of all children in primary and secondary schools between the ages of nine and eighteen.



The programmes shown below will be network productions for all regions.

Mon	*2.35 (15 mins)*	German	*IV and V Forms*
	2.54 (13 mins)	Junior Mathematics	*Age about 10*
	3.11 (20 mins)	Secondary Science	*Age 14 & over*
Tues	*2.57 (25 mins)*	Discovery	*VI Forms*
	3.26 (25 mins)	Drama	*Age over 13*
Wed	*2.57 (25 mins)*	Arts	*VI Forms*
Thurs	*2.35 (15 mins)*	Elementary French	*2nd and 3rd Year*
	2.54 (18 mins)	The World Around Us	*Age 10*
Fri	*2.35 (25 mins)*	Music	*Age 13-15*
	3.04 (18 mins)	Story Box	*Age 9-10*

In addition to the programmes networked throughout Great Britain, the Independent Television Companies listed below will *be transmitting additional programmes for individual regions.* Full details may be obtained from the Education Officer of your local Independent Television company.

1 ANGLIA TELEVISION
2 ASSOCIATED-REDIFFUSION
3 ASSOCIATED TELEVISION
4 BORDER TELEVISION
5 GRAMPIAN TELEVISION
6 GRANADA TELEVISION
7 SCOTTISH TELEVISION
8 SOUTHERN TELEVISION
9 TYNE-TEES TELEVISION
10 TELEVISION WALES & WEST
11 ULSTER TELEVISION
12 WESTWARD TELEVISION

ASSOCIATED-REDIFFUSION ASSOCIATED TELEVISION

GRANADA TV

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Jorge Luis Borges

The Babylonian Lottery

LIKE EVERYONE in Babylonia, I have been a proconsul, and like everyone a slave; I have known omnipotence, opprobrium and imprisonment. Look; the first finger of my right hand is missing. Look; through this rent in my cloak you can see a scarlet tattoo-mark on my stomach. It is the second sign, Beth. On nights when the moon is full, that letter gives me power over those men whose sign is Ghimel, but it subjects me to those with Aleph, who on moonless nights owe obedience to those with Ghimel. In the dawn twilight I have throttled the sacred bulls, in a cellar, before a black stone. For a whole lunar year I have been pronounced invisible. When I cried out no one answered, I stole bread and they did not behead me. I have known uncertainty: a state unknown to the Greeks. In a bronze room, before the silent handkerchief of the strangler, hope has not departed from me; in a stream of pleasures panic has not departed. Heraclides Ponticus reports with astonishment that Pythagoras remembered having once been Pyrrhus, and before that Euphorbus, and before that some other person; to recall similar vicissitudes, I have no need to call in death, or to resort to imposture.

JORGE LUIS BORGES *is the brilliant and distinguished Argentinian poet who was practically unknown and untranslated in the English-speaking world until he was awarded (together with Samuel Beckett) last year's Formentor International Prize.*

A note about him by his present translator, Mr. J. M. Cohen, appears in "Notes and Topics."

This almost appalling variety I owe to an institution that is unknown in other states, or that works there in an imperfect or secretive manner: the lottery. I have never traced its history; I know that the magi cannot agree about it; I know no more about it than a man unskilled in astrology can know about the moon. I belong to a crazy country in which the lottery is an essential part of reality; till to-day, I had never given it any more thought than to the behaviour of the inscrutable gods or of my own heart. Now, far away from Babylonia and its beloved customs, I reflect on the lottery with some astonishment, and remember the blasphemous conjectures that veiled men mutter in the twilight.

My father used to say that in olden days —was it centuries ago, or years?—the lottery in Babylonia was a game of the plebeian sort. He used to say (I do not know whether he was right) that barbers used to sell for a copper coin squares made of bone or parchment and inscribed with symbols. Then there used to be a draw in full daylight; and the winners received, without further resort to chance, some coins struck in silver. The procedure was rudimentary, as you see.

Of course these "lotteries" failed. Their moral value was nil. They were not directed at the whole of man's faculties, only at his hopes. Faced with the public's lack of interest, the merchants who started these trivial lotteries began to lose money. Someone tried to improve them; a few unlucky chances were inserted among the crowd of lucky numbers. By this improvement, buyers of

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numbered squares ran the double chance of winning some money or paying a fine that was sometimes quite large. This slight risk (there was only one unlucky number for each thirty that were lucky) naturally aroused the public interest. The Babylonians gave themselves up to the game. The man who did not buy lots was considered a spiritless coward. In time this justifiable contempt found a second object. Not only the man who did not play, but also the loser who paid his fine was despised. The Company (as people then began to call it) then had to watch the winners' interest, for the prizes could not be given if almost the complete revenue from penalties failed to reach their coffers. It started a lawsuit against the losers, and the judge sentenced them either to pay the original fine and the costs or to spend some days in prison. In order to defraud the Company, all opted for prison. From this defiance by a few men the absolute power, the ecclesiastical and metaphysical force of the Company, originates.

A LITTLE LATER, the lottery lists ceased to mention the fines, and confined themselves to announcing the number of days' imprisonment carried by each unlucky number. This omission, which was almost unnoticed at the time, was of capital importance. *It marked the first appearance in the lottery of a non-pecuniary element.* The results were great. Under pressure from the players, the Company found itself compelled to increase the number of unlucky lots.

Everyone knows that the Babylonian people are deeply devoted to logic, and also to symmetry. It was inconsistent that the lucky numbers should be reckoned in round sums of money and the unlucky in days and nights in prison. Some moralists argued that the possession of money did not always bring happiness, and that other kinds of good-fortune are perhaps more efficacious.

A different dissatisfaction spread through the poorer districts. Members of the sacerdotal college bought a number of chances, and enjoyed every vicissitude of fear and hope. The poor (reasonably or unavoidably envious) found themselves debarred from these risks, which were well-known to be delightful. The just desire that all, poor and rich alike, should participate equally in the lottery aroused an indignant agitation, the memory of which has not been effaced by the years. Some stubborn people did not understand (or pretended not to understand) that they were dealing with a new order of things, a necessary historical advance. A slave stole a crimson ticket, which in the draw carried the penalty that his tongue must be burned. But the law awarded the same penalty to anyone who stole a ticket. Some Babylonians argued that he deserved the red-hot iron on account of the theft; others who were more generous said that the executioner should burn his tongue in fulfilment of the lot he had drawn. There were riots and, most lamentably, there was bloodshed. But the Babylonian people finally imposed their will in face of opposition from the rich. They obtained the whole of their generous demands. Firstly, they succeeded in making the Company assume sole plenary powers. (This unification was necessary on account of the vastness and complexity of the new operations.) Secondly, they succeeded in making the lottery secret, free and universal. The sale of tickets for money was abolished. Once he was initiated in the mysteries of Bel, every free man automatically took part in the sacred lotteries, which were drawn every sixty nights in the labyrinths of the god, and which decided his fate until the next draw. The consequences were incalculable. A lucky draw could secure a man's promotion to the council of the magi or the imprisonment of an enemy (public or private), or a meeting, in the peaceful darkness of a bedroom, with the woman who is beginning to disturb us or whom we did not expect to see again; and an unlucky draw could bring mutilation, various kinds of disgrace, or death. Sometimes a single act—the assassination of C in a tavern, or the mysterious apotheosis of B—was the fortunate outcome of thirty or forty draws. This combination of chances was difficult. But it must

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be remembered that the members of the Company were (and are) both all-powerful and astute. In many cases, the knowledge that certain pleasures were merely the outcome of chance might have diminished their virtue; to obviate this difficulty the agents of the Company resorted to suggestion and to magic. Their methods and manœuvres were secret. To discover the secret hopes and hidden terrors of each person, they made use of astrologers and spies. There were certain stone lions, there was a sacred latrine called Qaphqa, there were certain clefts in a dusty aqueduct which, according to popular belief, *led to the Company*; well-wishers or ill-wishers left their reports in these places. This information, which was of variable authenticity, was preserved in an alphabetical file.

STRANGE though it may seem, there was no lack of complaints. The Company, with its habitual discretion, did not answer them directly. It preferred to scribble on the ruined walls of a mask-factory a short argument, that has now been incorporated in the holy scriptures. This doctrinal statement observed that the lottery marks the interference of chance in the world-order, and that the acceptance of errors did not invalidate, but, on the other hand, increased its power. It observed furthermore that those lions and the sacred receptacle, although not disowned by the Company (which did not renounce its right to consult them) functioned without official guarantee.

This declaration dispelled the public unrest, but also produced other results, perhaps unforeseen by its author. It profoundly modified the spirit and the activities of the Company. I have not much time left; we have been warned that our ship is about to sail. But I will try to explain.

Incredible though it may seem, no one had so far tried to discover any general theory of probability. Babylonians are not much given to speculation. They respect the decisions of chance, entrust their lives, their hopes, their panic fears to them, but they never think of investigating their labyrinthine laws, or the revolving spheres that reveal them. Nevertheless the official pronouncement that I have noted aroused many discussions of a judicio-mathematical character, one of which produced the following proposition: if the lottery represents an intensification of chance, an occasional infusion of chaos into the cosmos, would it not be proper for chance to operate at every stage of the draw, and not at one alone? Is it not absurd that chance should decree a man's death, and that the circumstances of that death—confiscation of property, publicity, delay of an hour or a century—should not be subject to chance? These very reasonable misgivings finally produced a considerable reform, the complexities of which (intensified by centuries of usage) are only understood by a few specialists. I will nevertheless attempt to give a brief account of them if only in symbolical form.

Let us imagine a first draw, which decrees that a man shall die. To complete this, a second draw takes place, which decides among (let us say) nine possible corollaries. Of these corollaries four may lead to a third draw which will decide the name of the executioner, two may substitute for the fatal decree a happy one (the discovery of a treasure, let us say), another may aggravate the penalty (that is to say, make the death a disgraceful one or embellish it with tortures), and others may forbid its fulfilment.... This the symbolic scheme. In reality *the numbers of draws is infinite*. No decision is final, all lead on to a number of others. The ignorant suppose that infinite draws require infinite time; in reality all that is necessary is that time shall be infinitely divisible, as we learn from the famous parable of the race with the Tortoise. This infinity is surprisingly congruous with the numerical convolutions of chance and with the Celestial Archetype of the Lottery, worshipped by the Platonists. Some distorted echo of our rites seems to have reached the Tiber. Aelius Lampridius, in his life of Antoninus Heliogabalus, mentions that this emperor used to write on shells the luck he reserved for his guests, so that

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one would receive ten golden pounds, and another ten flies, ten dormice or ten bears. It is worth recalling that Heliogabalus was educated in Asia Minor, among the priests of the god whose name he bore.

There are also impersonal lots, of indefinite application: one ordains that a Taprobana sapphire shall be thrown into the Euphrates; another that a bird shall be released from the roof of a tower; another that every century an ounce of sand shall be subtracted from (or added to) the innumerable quantity on the beach. The consequences are at times terrible.

THANKS to the beneficent influence of the Company, our customs are permeated by chance. The buyer of a dozen jars of Damascus wine will not be surprised if one of them contains a charm or a viper; the scribe who draws up a document seldom fails to introduce some faulty detail; I myself, in this hurried statement have falsified a splendour here and a horror there. Perhaps also, some mysterious ennui.... Our historians, who are the most clear-sighted in the world, have invented a method of rectifying chance; the working of this method is well-known to be (generally) trustworthy, though, of course, it cannot be divulged without some measure of falsehood. In any case, there is nothing so contaminated by fiction as the history of the Company.... A palaeographic document, dug up in a temple, may be the product of yesterday's draw, or of one centuries ago. No book is published without some difference between every copy. The scribes swear a secret oath always to omit, interpolate or vary something. The indirect lie is also practised.

The Company, with divine modesty, avoids all publicity. Its agents, as is natural, are secret; the orders it is continually (perhaps incessantly) giving do not differ from those promulgated by impostors. Moreover, who can boast that he is a true impostor? The drunkard who invents a ridiculous order, the dreamer who suddenly wakes and throttles the wife who is sleeping beside him, are they not perhaps carrying out a secret decision of the Company? Its silent functioning, comparable to that of God, arouses all kinds of conjectures. One abominable suggestion is that for centuries the Company has not existed, and that the sacred confusion in our lives is purely hereditary and traditional; another says that it is eternal and will endure till the last night, when the last god obliterates the world; another proclaims that the Company is omnipotent, but that it is only influential in tiny things, like a bird's cry, or the colour of rust or dust, or half-dreams at dawn. Another, speaking with the mouth of the masked hieresiarchs, says *that it has never existed and never will exist.* Another, just as base, argues that it does not matter whether you assert or deny the existence of this shadowy corporation, for Babylonia is nothing but an infinite game of chance.

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Luigi Barzini

The Difference in the South

Letter from Italy

Is Italy one, as she appears to be to the casual visitor and as all the books confirm? Or can she be more exactly described as an arbitrary union of two separate countries, *"le due Italie"*, as the Italians say, inhabited by two separate people, as superficially alike but fundamentally dissimilar and antagonistic as, for instance, the Arabs and the Jews?

Italy's case, of course, is not unique. Almost invisible divisions exist in most other countries. In old unified nations like France, Great Britain, or Spain, the people also like to distinguish between their southern and northern types. Such characters are part of the popular lore. They appear on the stage, in the cinema, in proverbs, jokes and tales, often in their regional costumes and always with their traditional traits, as fixed and recognisable as masks from the *Teatro dell'Arte*. Still, they are usually nothing more than relics of the past, unimportant distinctions in the unified national character, with little relation to actual reality. Only rarely, and then only in the most extreme historical emergencies, do people betray their national loyalties and fight for their regional allegiances.

In other countries, however, whose political union was achieved only recently against heavy odds by fortunate minorities and is still fragile, such division between North and South tend to be much more important than mere cracks which are easily papered over. They are seldom matter for jokes. They are the outward signs of a definite cleavage, the cause of deep-seated tensions which make political life insecure, unbalanced, and dangerous. All decisions must be made with the need to keep the country together clearly in mind. Few real problems are soberly assessed and solved. Imaginary problems always have precedence, phoney issues on which it is easier to gain the superficial consent of the majority. In such breakable countries politicians usually prefer vast aggressive plans, nationalistic myths, colonial wars, wars against weaker and unprepared neighbours, and other such stirring adventures, which allow the people to forget their differences and find an emotional but unstable appearance of unity, rather than dull, long term, but useful programmes.

This necessity also helps to explain the history of Italy in the last hundred years. A peaceful, unmilitary, reasonable, and realistic people dedicated itself to colonial adventures (from the occupation of Massawa in 1885 to the conquest of Libya in 1911 and Ethiopia in 1935), to back-breaking military expenditures (which included the maintenance of an army and a navy among the largest in Europe), and to strenuous and sometimes ludicrous attempts to maintain at all costs the rank of a Great Power. All this necessarily retarded or prevented the development of political institutions, the improvement of the administrative machinery, the training of an élite, the education of the masses, the promotion of industry and commerce, and the modernisation of more backward areas.

There were other factors that contributed to the making of Italy what she was and what she is today. Still, the difference between her two halves and the fragility of her national unity were among the more important. They often forced governments of the right and of the left to pursue identical projects. Massawa was occupied by the right-wing, jingoist Prime Minister Francesco Crispi, Tripoli by the left wing *"liberale"* Giovanni Giolitti. The ultimate exasperation and consequence of such policies was, in the end, the rise of Fascism. Italy's ills helped to determine not only her history but that of

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Europe and the world. Italy's future welfare and existence as a free and western nation still largely depend on how well the problem of the co-existence of North and South, the *"Problema del Mezzogiorno"*, is understood, studied, and solved. Inevitably one is led to speculate how large an influence Italy's insecurity may again have on the peace of Europe and the rest of the world.

WHOLE LIBRARIES have been filled with studies on the ancient *"Problema,"* from the historic investigation by Leopoldo Franchetti and Sidney Sonnino in 1876, down to Danilo Dolci's and Carlo Levi's emotional denunciations. Parliamentary committees, economists, sociologists, historians, scholars, geographers, moralists, politicians, and mere journalists have all attempted to define the reasons why *"le due Italie"* were *"due"* and not *"una,"* and why the gap between them was so difficult to fill. It is, in fact, a magic gap, which appears to grow wider and deeper as more is done to fill it. Why?

All kinds of primary causes of southern backwardness have been isolated at one time or another by various authors: history; fortuitous circumstances; the fact that at decisive turning points the throne of Naples always fell to a weak queen; foreign invasions and dominations; the Greek, Saracen, Spanish influences; the Bourbons, Garibaldi, the Piedmontese bureaucracy; the lack of rain, the shortage of fertile land, the heat; the laziness of the southern élite (who seem to prefer steady government jobs to more lucrative but risky business ventures); the avidity of the northern élite (who are accused of having smothered southern industries in the cradle after the unification)—these and many more causes have been indicated at one time or another. They are, of course, all true, at least partially true. Many may be considered at the same time the effect and the cause of others. None, however, is sufficient by itself to explain the phenomena and to point to an infallible cure.

ALL SCHOLARS understandably start from a similar presumption, that southerners and northerners are fundamentally the same people but that fortuitous circumstances of one kind or another have temporarily separated them morally, culturally, and economically. They have all been disappointed. No elimination of fortuitous circumstances has yet corrected in the slightest degree the difference between Italians. Few experts have tried to start from what is obvious: the acceptance of the existence of two countries speaking the same language. All the rest necessarily follows, the reasons why the south does not prosper and why all legislation designed to to make it prosper hitherto seems to have failed.

The few who have tried to study the problem from this point of view have done so only reluctantly, obscurely, and incidentally, without ever going deeply into the matter, without drawing the necessary conclusions, and using only polite and euphemistic terms. Their reluctance is easily understood. A taboo stopped them. They were going against popular ideals, official rhetoric, the patriotic clichés inherited from the *Risorgimento*. On these the state was precariously built. They were apparently the only cement holding the country together. How could one say that Italians were not one people, indivisible, all brothers, kept apart in the past only by the malevolence of foreign powers? Were they not one and the same in front of the law and under arms?

There is no doubt that all Italians, observed from a distance, have a family resemblance. They all come from more or less the same stock, have predominantly dark hair, dark eyes, and vivacious expressions. In general they have all experienced similar historical vicissitudes, learned approximately the same lessons through the past centuries, conceived a similar philosophy of life, shared more or less the same hopes and aspirations, and have developed the same talents in order to survive. Italians consider that living is the principal aim of life. They pursue happiness *"all'italiana"*, that is they try to further their own private welfare (or, as Guicciardini put it, *"il particulare"*) rather than that of society.

They must, therefore, defend themselves and their families against the envy, hatred, ill will, greed, and treachery of the outside world, the State, society, law, and the mighty. They must be prepared to survive natural calamities, historical convulsions, and political upheavals. Unlike the inhabitants of older nations, politically better organised and more advanced, Italians have learned to rely less on collective institutions and organisations and more on their own private virtues and public vices, their personal power, adaptability, charm, intelligence, and shrewdness. In Italy, families often prosper while society decays. The Italian Republic has been defined as a "loose federation of families."

When studied a little more closely, however,

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one is struck by one fundamental difference between north and south. All others seem secondary. It is the primary cause of the slower development of the south, in the past century, and of the faster development of the north. It has so far frustrated all attempts to bring the two standards of living more or less on to one level. It will always make the spending of at least a part of all money invested a complete waste. It will, in the end, strengthen even more the mutual mistrust and misunderstanding separating southerners and northerners and make national unity even more fragile and unstable than in the past. There is now the danger that vain hopes will be raised, deeper and more irreconcilable conflicts will be cultivated, with possibly catastrophic results.

WHAT is this difference?

We have seen that both northerners and southerners want, above all, to protect themselves and their families from risks. They want to survive and see to it that their sons, grandsons, and their progenies survive, defying society, history, cataclysms, and adverse fortune for as long as possible. Here the resemblance stops.

The northerner thinks that there is only one sure way to achieve these aims: the acquisition of wealth, *"la ricchezza."* Only wealth can assure the family's defence. The southerner, on the other hand, thinks that only power, prestige, and authority will do the job.

The northerner of whatever class is therefore perpetually trying to acquire wealth in its various forms. He wants a job, a good job, a better job. He wants land, capital, credits, shares, houses, technical and scientific knowledge which can be converted into high salaries, executive posts in good businesses, expensive and rare university degrees, which assure him better-paid employment, and will undergo any sacrifice in order to gain these advantages for himself or his sons. He wants a rich wife, rich daughters and sons-in-law, and rich friends. He is very close to being a pure *homo economicus*.

The southerner, on the other hand, wants to be obeyed, admired, respected, feared, and envied. For him the important aims in life are rank, influence, power in any one of its many forms, not wealth but the appearance of wealth. In whatever rank of society he is born, he will pursue those aims. The little peasant as well as the landed proprietor, will cultivate the gratitude of powerful friends and relatives, the fear of his enemies, and the respect of everybody.

LET US MAKE an imaginary comparison. A northerner inherits a farm. He dreams of developing it, improving cultivation of techniques, applying modern scientific methods of irrigation and drainage, in order to increase its output and his profits. He wants to buy more and more land with his savings. He wants to set aside a lot of money, to invest in profitable concerns. He wants to leave as much as possible to his heirs. He sends his son to an agricultural school.

A southerner inherits a similar farm. He dreams of renting it for whatever it may bring him and of then forgetting it. With the money he wants to go to Naples or to Rome, and support himself while struggling to acquire a *"posizione."* He may study for a difficult university degree of the kind that produces no income but great prestige, try to win a Government post, gamble and live recklessly in high society acquiring great fame; he may become a celebrated criminal lawyer.

IN NAPLES AND IN MILAN (to quote another example) there are wholesale fruit and vegetable merchants. They are classified as *"grossisti di frutta e verdura"* in the telephone book. They pay dues to a local association and to a national organisation of wholesale dealers in fruit and vegetables. They may meet at national congresses to debate the common interest of their trade. It would be misleading to suppose, however, that the two have similar occupations and pursue similar aims.

The Neapolitan usually tours the countryside with his henchmen, bullying and protecting peasants in his sector, who must sell their products only to him at the prices he fixes. He defends his territory and his vassal farmers from the encroachment of competitors. He carries a gun. He shoots straight. As everybody knows he can enforce his will by killing his opponents, and sometimes does, he never, or almost never, has the need to shoot. If the farmers were to refuse to sell at his price he would leave their produce to rot in the fields. They never refuse.

A superficial observer, of course, would not know what is going on, would notice none of the secret threats and fears. Farmer, *"grossista"*, competitors, all smile, joke, exchange pleasantries, drink *vino*, shake hands. They seem to be the best of friends. Only rarely the police dis-

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cover that something must have gone wrong, when they find a corpse in a country lane. Nobody usually gets killed, if he is careful. The culprits are seldom identified.

The Milanese *"grossista"* is an entirely different kind of man. He resembles his Swiss, Austrian, French, or Dutch colleagues more than his Neapolitan or Sicilian competitors. He carries no gun, is followed by no henchmen, rarely sees the farmers he buys from, almost never tours the countryside. He has a modern office, telephones, secretaries, graphs on the wall. His business is done by telephone, with brokers, buyers, or correspondents in Germany, France, Switzerland. His aim is to ship more and more refrigerated railway cars abroad, filled with more and more fresh produce at the highest possible prices. He dreams of improving packaging, advertising, shipping technique, his knowledge of foreign tastes, and so forth.

He naturally makes a lot of money, in good years one hundred or one thousand times more than his Neapolitan colleague does. Still, the Neapolitan colleague is not unhappy about it. Money is not his principal aim. He wants other things in life. He wants to be well-known (his sinister nickname must silence people in the fruit and vegetable market and seal their mouths when questioned by the police). He wants to be feared (policemen often prefer not to see him go by). He wants to be powerful (politicians sometimes purchase his help at election-time with favours). He wants to be loved (he will redress wrongs and protect weaker people asking for his aid). He wants people to bend to his will, pretty girls as well as farmers.

ALL THESE, of course, are grossly exaggerated simplifications, examples chosen as didactic illustrations of the point. Nothing is that simple in real life. Exceptions are numerous. Not all the South is purely southern, nor is all the North only northern. Frequently one finds men in North Italy who apparently want to increase their power, authority, prestige, and rank above anything else. There are important industrialists in Turin or Milan who live monastic lives and who dedicate their time to increasing their capacity to command rather than their patrimony. Likewise, in the south of Italy one finds men who forego the preoccupations of prestige and authority simply in order to get rich.

Often such exceptions are mere illusions; when observed more closely they confirm the general rule. The northerner who seems to pursue power only does so because power will generate more wealth, and the southerner who wants to accumulate money regards this merely as another way of achieving a higher and more respected place in society. There are, for instance, northern politicians in Rome who use their dominating position in order to amass a fortune. There are, likewise, southerners who amass fortunes in order to become deputies, under-secretaries, and Cabinet ministers. Generally speaking, southerners tend to make money in order to rule, northerners to rule in order to make money.

STILL, THE DIFFERENCE, while not always identifiable in individuals, is always discernible in the two societies. It permeates every detail. It strengthens the constrasting characteristics of the two sections. It widens the gap. Official Italy has apparently succeeded merely in unifying names, labels and titles, but not reality.

Take a *"prefetto,"* for instance. He is a functionary appointed by the central government, who rules over a province. He is always a southerner. Only southerners, as we have seen, like badly-paid jobs with honorific titles and high protocol precedence. He rates the title of *"Eccellenza,"* like a Roman prince, and sits very high at any table.

Nothing would be more misleading than to think that the *"prefetto"* in a northern province has any resemblance to his colleague in a southern province. In the North he is an inconspicuous bureaucrat. Nobody remembers his name. He is seldom invited except to official functions. In the South he is ruler, *ras*, chieftain, *catapan*, a social leader. He is surrounded by courtiers and sycophants. He goes to banquets, weddings, funerals, and christenings. His word, a mere suggestion on the telephone, or a wish whispered as to himself, is law. He sometimes can still (and always could in the past) swing elections. When he goes by, people bow low and take their hats off.

It is pointless to pass judgment on either of these two societies, to say which is better, more civilised or advanced, which is more likely in the long run to provide the "greatest good for the greatest number." Is the northerner really happier than the southerner? He has considerable material advantages. Do they compensate for the spiritual poverty, the levelling, the crude hedonism, the infantile culture, and the harsh discipline which are inseparable from

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an advanced industrialised society? Is the southerner happier, then? He lives a poorer but freer life. He is not bound by rigid schedules. He defends himself, like the red Indians in the prairies, and enjoys using all his faculties in the daily struggle to overwhelm his competitors. He has time to pursue idle and wasteful passions. His life is nearer nature and natural instincts. Do these advantages compensate for the poverty and insecurity of his life?

CONSIDER what great benefits southerners contributed to past Italian achievements. A people wholly dedicated to the rational and scientifice pursuit of wealth inevitably becomes dull. Civilisation and the graces of life flourish best where there are disinterested, dedicated, and intelligent people, men who accept a lower standard of living for the sake of more satisying occupations and who prefer dignity, fame, authority, or ease of conscience to money or security: scholars, poets, artists, novelists, saints, philosophers, jurists, eccentrics, spendthrift aristocrats, *et al*. The *Mezzogiorno* has produced a great majority of such characters in Italian life. Italy's debt to them is great.

The State has been cheaply run for decades, up to the last war, by able and honest southern bureaucrats. The universities were and are staffed mainly by southern professors. Some of the best novels in contemporary Italy were written by southerners, the Sicilians Verga, Capuana, De Roberto, Brancati, Vittorini, and now Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa. Her greatest playwright, Pirandello, was born in Agrigento. Her greatest philosopher, Croce, and one of her greatest poets, d'Annunzio, were born in the Abruzzi. Her colonies were administered with great personal sacrifice by competent officials from the South. Most of the staff officers in the army and navy were from the southern half. The Sicilians formed a nucleus of the Foreign Service where they excelled because their native qualities were the same as those which are indispensable in the conduct of foreign negotiations. Most heroes in her wars were from the South. The principal publishing houses entirely dedicated to unprofitable culture were in Bari (Laterza), Naples (Ricciardi), and Messina (Principato). They kept the Italian soul alive in the dark times of the Fascist dictatorship, as the Benedictines did in the remote Middle Ages.

The fact that many southern traits and habits may be classified as typical of an "agrarian," "feudal," or "pre-capitalistic" society is only a partial but a misleading explanation. It again presupposes that southerners would be northerners if only they were given the chance. There is no doubt that in the *Mezzogiorno* one still encounters beliefs and habits belonging to earlier ages. One often finds, for instance, to quote a few obvious examples, love of display and pomp, jealous defence of one's own personal honour, contempt for productive occupations, disdain for trade, and disregard for the careful administration of one's own property. One finds the fierce loyalties of the humble for the mighty, and the complementary feelings of the mighty, who must lead, protect, and care for their *"clientes"* in all circumstances. One also finds that southerners prefer their own private laws to recourse to the official machinery, the police and the courts. It is admittedly true that all these were common traits in Europe before the industrial revolution a few centuries ago.

The point is not that such habits survived, but why they survived at all. Southerners, when deploring the vices and virtues of their people, call them *"spagnolismi,"* or remnants of the Spanish domination. The Spanish dominated Milan for about as long as they dominated the Kingdom of Naples; they also dominated Flanders and the Low Countries for centuries. Why is it that only in the *Mezzogiorno* were their teachings adopted apparently for ever while they were easily forgotten elsewhere? Why should the Milanese, the Belgians, the Dutch have developed the un-Spanish virtues of business enterprise, industry, and the appreciation of the value of money which southerners never learned?

Why did the Neapolitans and the Sicilians cling to "feudal" manners, if not because their own national character made them more adaptable to such a way of life? The industrial revolution started in the North of Italy at about the same time as in the South. Factories sprang up in both regions within a few years of each other. Why were they promoted by the King in the South and by private individuals in the North? Why did they decay rapidly in the South, after the unification of the country, and flourish in the North?

THE POINT WHICH INTERESTS us here is simply that southerners learned from all foreigners, including the Spaniards, only that which suited them, and always clung to their own way of life through thick and thin, in spite of everything, sometimes daring defeat, poverty, degra-

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dation, and desperation in order not to betray their own nature and habits. Like the Chinese, they digested and assimilated foreign rulers, ways, and ideas, and accepted them only when transformed into something of their own. They could never be untrue to themselves. Just as a weak people does, when invaded and dominated by powerful foreigners, they often produced in the past and still produce today comical and unconscious parodies of the North. The two French kings of Naples at the time of Napoleon's rule over Europe, Joseph Bonaparte and Joachim Murat, introduced the *Code Napoléon* into the southern legal system. It was a revolutionary initiative. After a few years, the new laws were modified, interpreted, and applied in such a way that the French lawyers could not recognise them. Or take the railways. When the tracks were laid in the North, they followed the shortest and cheapest routes between cities. In the South, they meandered all over the landscape, in order to pass in front of obscure hamlets where some powerful person or his friend was born, or to lengthen the mileage and enrich the contractor responsible for the construction of some particular section.

The southerners' attachment to their own ways is often concealed. It is not now fashionable to praise what are officially considered to be reactionary prejudices and vices. Confronted with the modern world and its complicated requirements, southerners react with insincere praise, sincere envy, and polite cynicism; they shrug their shoulders philosophically and make sarcastic little jokes about the stupidity of northerners, the *"Piemontesi fessi."* Or sometimes they will write an article or an essay in defence of the South which is so full of sad allusions, irony, and self-pity that few can understand it. An example of this is the rehabilitation of the last Bourbon kings of Naples, which has been going on orally and in print for years. It is, like the Austrians' nostalgia for Franz Josef, in reality not the rehabilitation of a man, a monarch, a royal house, or an institution, but of the people themselves as they were before the fall, of the world as they understood it and were happy in it.

Some of these disillusioned southerners have turned for salvation to the Communist party, to a system which appears even more hostile to their way of life than the North is. Efficient, disciplined, egalitarian, "scientific," the Communist creed makes northern Italy and industrialised Europe seem almost lackadaisical and benign by comparison. What southerners like in the Communist party is its hatred for the bourgeois and liberal revolution, its hope for a new hierarchical world, almost feudal in its stratified construction, where free competition is abolished, and any man with powerful friends can defend his position in life.

Southerners naturally cannot go back to the happy days of Ferdinand II, the king who spoke dialect and knew his people's foibles. He used to say: "My kingdom is an island, protected by salt water on three sides and holy water on the fourth." The Papal States no longer defend the northern border from the rest of Europe. At the same time, southerners have little liking for and understanding of the modern world, in which they do not feel at ease, are often beaten and humiliated by duller competitors, who ignore the fine points of the art of living but stick diligently to their chores. Southerners, as we have seen, cannot easily or quickly change themselves. They can only sometimes make believe they do. Their malaise has no apparent cure. They cannot become efficient northerners, bent merely on making money. Yet they cannot endure their condition of "inferior," or "backward" people.

This is the psychological heart of the *"Problema del Mezzogiorno."*

THE "PROBLEMA" is nothing new. It goes back to the early nineteenth century, when northern "patriots" and "liberals" wanted to join the rest of Italy in a unified state also in order to dump their unsolvable problems into the common lap, and let northerners take care of them. After the unification, the South immediately started clamouring for special attention. Cavour's dying words, a few months after the proclamation of the new kingdom, were dedicated to *"i poveri napoletani."*

Special laws, special projects, special programmes of public works, special credits for business ventures, special appropriations for the South have been a constant feature of Italian policy since the beginning of the century. Giovanni Giolitti and Benito Mussolini dedicated some of the best years of their lives to satisfying the South's claims for particular attention. Since 1950 the new democratic republic has spent in the South more than double the sum which had been spent in the previous half century. The progress has been immense. Nevertheless, the old ills are still present.

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Political choice, in the South, is also more closely connected with questions of prestige and relative strength and less with ideologies than in the North. The electorate as a rule votes for the biggest party and the strongest candidate. This generally means that the party or faction which wins an election is generally the one the voters thought would win. The majority party, the one holding power, therefore often tends, by a kind of geometrical progression, to be continually increasing its majority. At the same time, there is usually only one great opposition party, gathering all kinds of dissatisfied voters. These two groupings are, at the present time, the Christian Democrats (in power) and the Communists (in opposition). The preoccupation with relative strength and numbers and the disregard for ideas explains why politicians in the South, particularly Sicilians, pass so easily from one side to another, from Fascism to Communism, from planning to "laissez-faire," from Republicanism to Monarchism, from Marxism to Liberalism, from Free Trade to Protectionism. Power is all. A Sicilian proverb says: *"To command is better than to f——..."*

This preoccupation also explains why in the past southerners were more attracted by some aspects of Fascism than northerners. They were impressed by the outward panoply, the uniforms, the tasselled hats, the guns at the side, the daggers at the belt, the boots, the overweening oratory about annihilating the weak and the timid. Southerners took part enthusiastically in the various African campaigns in which, by the way, they generously shed their blood. They liked conquering and protecting weaker people. It never occurred to them that the money spent to colonise Libya or Ethiopia could have been better but less splendidly enjoyed at home, raising their own standard of living. The same preoccupation now makes them prefer Stalinism to a more moderate form of Communism. Southern party members and fellow-travelling Socialists cheered when the Soviet armoured divisions marched into Hungary and reconquered Budapest.

Because of this ancient obsession with power and the visible outward marks of power—authority, rank, prestige—the southerner is a sharper political animal than the northerner. He can weigh up at a glance the true resolution and the resources of an opponent. He knows when that resolution and those resources exceed his own and the exact moment when his own fear is smaller than his opponent's. This political flair he has had to develop since infancy, so as to get the simplest things done in the world. Every southerner, from the land-owning princes to the illiterate herdsmen and day labourers, has been brought up to obey privately the rules which in more advanced countries are valid only in public affairs, political struggles, international negotiations, and the great issues of war and peace. He naturally negotiates only from strong positions; he divides, whenever he can, his oponents in order to rule over them; he "licks them or joins them" like every true statesman.

Naturally enough, southerners who easily conquered all-powerful but badly-paid positions in the Italian state administration and in politics, exerted an immense influence in the shaping of the policy for the solution of the problem of their native land. The majority of cabinet ministers, under-secretaries, high officials, technicians, managers of State enterprises, State banks, and employees who were of southern extraction, did all they could to help. In the last sixty years practically everything that government intervention, State money, and politics could do was done.

A short journey through any part of Southern Italy by rail or car will reveal this.

The visitor will see everywhere a large amount of buildings erected with public money in the last two or three centuries, more than in any other country, all of which are in various stages of preservation. He will first see (chronologically speaking) the Cyclopean structures of his great-grandfather's time, erected by the first Bourbons, Joseph Bonaparte, and Joachim Murat, and finally the incredible amount of works done in the first fifteen years of Ferdinand II's reign. This still constitutes the great foundation, the majority of basic works: roads, bridges, harbours, public buildings, churches, and hospitals. Then, the more familiar and modest buildings of the early Victor Emmanuel III period, the years before the first world war, followed by the more numerous, lavish, splendid, and rhetorical attempts of Mussolini to perpetuate his name and the fame of his régime. Lastly, the glittering new buildings erected by his contemporaries.

In each of the older architectural epochs, note the execrable state of repair. In the suburbs of Naples, for instance, some factories were built

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only at the beginning of the century but are now falling down. The plaster is peeling from the walls. It is impossible to read the name of the firm painted on the façade, decades ago, obliterated by the sun and the dust. Rotten roof beams bend under the weight of moss-encrusted tiles. Doors hang from rusty hinges. The courtyards are piled with refuse, dilapidated machinery, weather-beaten packing cases, and litter which nobody carries away amongst the wild grass. The factories still run, of course. Somehow, on the brink of collapse, the wheels turn. The reason is that economic criteria are considered secondary in the South. The factory is not a strictly economic enterprise. It was built with public money grants and special tax facilities. It is not meant to function efficiently. Its shoddy products are probably cheap enough to sell in the market, but cheap only because interest is low, no money is spent for modernisation, upkeep, renovation, and wages are lower than elsewhere, miserably low, in fact.

The factories built by the Fascists are somewhat better, if only because they are newer. Still, they show no sign of improvement and modernisation. The recent post-war factories, ultramodern and dramatic, with plastic roofs and bright dazzling colours, are still in relatively good conditions. (Even here, flakes of plaster and large spots of moisture reveal their non-distant future.) Sometimes, near the modern villages of the *"Enti di Riforma"* (the agrarian reform organisation which split up the large land-holdings into small farms) are the villages of similar enterprises built back in Fascist days. They have been allowed to decay, with no money spent for repairs. They look like the crumbling ruins of some distant and forgotten historical era, disorderly agglomerations of huts and hovels, their roofs sprouting with weeds and wild fig bushes. Occasionally, the roof has been blown off, or has collapsed, and the flora proliferates inside on the walls and floors. Often, doors, windows, roofs, doors, sills and other movable parts have been stolen. The ruined houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum, in the care of the Ministry of Public Instruction, are in far better condition and look newer.

THE LACK OF UPKEEP strikes one everywhere. Even today, the law enabling the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno* to spend millions of lire for the modernisation of the country contains no provision whatever for the maintenance of existing works. Maintenance is not considered important in the South because the primary function of any structure is psychological. Factories are not built to produce goods efficiently and cheaply nor to compete with northern enterprises. They are built to be inaugurated with great pomp on the first day, to be admired as a sign of modernity and industrialisation, a proof of power, to provoke envy in neighbouring villages, to gain the people's gratitude towards the local political patron or the predominating party, and finally to afford a miserable living to a few workers. In the past, when our fathers discovered what eventually happened to public works carried out in the South, they called it "the cemetery of public works." It is still often called that today.

The psychological and uneconomic reasons for many structures are revealed by other signs. Often the structures (even when useful) are too elaborate, massive and expensive for the town or village they serve. On both the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic shores the traveller's eyes will rest on large, relatively new harbours, equipped with granite or concrete moles, quays, and ample storage installations. Many are usually empty and silent, no more than sporadic havens for the odd fishing smack when the *buriana* blows. Likewise, one meets immense post offices whence only a few letters and postcards are sent weekly by a small population of illiterate peasants, or monumental school buildings, sheltering a tiny number of children, which cannot be properly heated nor cleaned with the miserable money allotted for the purpose. Often such waste is explained away as "foresight," the preparation of suitable conveniences for, and the stimulation of, future growth. This is clearly contradicted by the fact that the local population and local activities have, in many cases, dwindled instead of increasing. Few instances of public expenditure really succeeded in creating a chain of connected initiatives and investments out of nothing. The organs failed to create the function. Many such constructions, very old, moderately old, new, and very new, remind one of the stately imperial buildings or public works of the Raj in old India, isolated signs of alien power and splendour.

The psychological character of many of these is finally proved by their siting. In Palermo there is a new power station, built since the war. (Palermo is specially prone to display investments. After the unification of Italy, in 1860, the city urgently built two opera theatres, both

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bigger than San Carlo, la Scala, and the Opéra in Paris. Apparently, the *Palermitani* thought they needed nothing else so urgently). The power station was not placed away from public gaze, behind a hill, suitably masked so that the ugly buildings could be made invisible, and the smoke and fumes less obnoxious. It has been proudly placed near the harbour, in the heart of the city, thus ruining one of the most beautiful sights of all Italy, a famous and historical panorama, dear to ancient poets and painters. It has been placed, incidentally, in precisely the spot where in older times a cathedral would have been erected, or, even earlier, a marble temple dedicated to a tutelary saint or god who might endow the city with whatever benefits were expected of him at the time.

UNDOUBTEDLY many things have changed in the South, many more perhaps than the reader of these pages has been led to believe. It is, after all, no longer Ferdinand II's "island." It is part of a contemporary modern nation, part of Europe, part of the contemporary world. It was not sheltered from history. It could not be protected from the influx of world-wide trends. The large amounts of money spent in the last few years could not help having an influence. Some of the money at least was well spent. Even that which was wasted, stolen, or dedicated to the satisfaction of psychological needs alone, could not somehow help in modifying the local scene, even if not always in the direction desired.

Then there were the wars, the many wars fought by Italians since 1860, in which southerners did their duty in strange and distant lands, the deserts of North Africa, the plateau of Ethiopia, the snow-covered Alps, Greece and Russia. All people bring back from wars a secret resolution to live different and better lives from those they have known. Emigration to North and South America and to the rest of Europe provoked a return flow of money, new ideas, new habits, and restlessness. For a century-and-a-half able men from the middle class emigrated to Central and Northern Italy, where they and their descendants now occupy leading positions. (It is only known by few, for instance, that the Pirelli family, founders and owners of a vast rubber empire, are from Taranto.) Southern soldiers brought back northern wives. The movies and television forced the inhabitants of obscure villages to gaze upon an idealised, bourgeois, and well-fed image of the outside world. The sudden and vigorous upsurge of economic activities in the north of Italy after the last war could not help having a weaker but distinct after-effect on southern life. Unemployed workers go north by the tens of thousands, where they find jobs. Those who are left behind have steadier employment and higher wages.

All this and numerous other factors inevitably changed the appearance, the habits, the life, the ideals of many southerners.

Factories are visible everywhere, new factories, built in the last few years. Some, of course, are already shut. They were built with no clear ideas, not enough money, no experience, to satisfy the usual emotional cravings. Others function. They sometimes produce something which has been manufactured for a long time better and cheaper in the North. The South believes not in specialisation (everything that is traditional is thought to bestow less prestige and honour) but in emulation. A few plants, here and there, flourish. They are the factories which nature decreed should be built on the spot, because of objective reasons, the vicinity of raw materials, the cheap labour supply, abundant energy, easy transport facilities, etc. Some of them were built by northern firms, taking full advantage of the legislation facilitating economic enterprises in the South.

A stretch of coast between Syracuse and Augusta, where the Greek city of Megara is believed once to have been, where until lately were only contorted olive trees and flocks of sheep grazing in front of the wine-dark sea, now looks like Houston or Galveston, Texas, the plains crowded with intricate chemical factories, yellow, red and blue pipes, exploiting local raw materials.

New quarters in the decrepit cities everywhere look like provincial Brasilias. The very audacity of the architecture denounces, as it does in South America, the fear of appearing old-fashioned, of seeming anchored to ancient habits, left behind by the march of Progress. The faces of people have changed in the cities and the most prosperous towns. The women are freer and better dressed. The crowds in the streets look better fed. The younger people especially are determined not to eke out a living as their ancestors have always done, no longer to resign themselves to the will of God, the favour of the mighty, the caprice of fortune, and the everlasting *"miseria."* They are taller and straighter than their fathers.

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YET, IN SPITE of all these considerable and sometimes incredible improvements, some of them the result of the will of man and many of circumstances, it would be dishonest to say that the *"Problema del Mezzogiorno"* is on its way to a solution. To begin with, the immense poverty still exists. The presence of its pressure underlies everything. Most of the improvements and modernisations can be observed around a few cities, in some of the most fertile agrarian sections, or in isolated spots specially favoured by nature. Everywhere else, where the casual visitor from the North does not usually go, around the corner from a prosperous scene, a stone's throw from the resplendent new hotels, factories, or workers' houses, and almost everywhere in the countryside, the *"miseria"* is still supreme.

It is a better *"miseria,"* often comforted by new, modern conveniences, a road, a public telephone, sometimes an aqueduct, sewers, a doctor twice a week, a *"miseria"* tempered perhaps by the distribution of American surplus flour, condensed milk, and beans to the destitute, but *"miseria"* nevertheless. Even if, however, the process of modernisation should continue, and everything everywhere showed the mark of a definite improvement, if everybody had a roof over his head, enough to eat, a job, relative security, medical care, and an elementary education, the *"Problema"* would still not be solved. The malaise and the restlessness, the feeling of being the victims of historical injustice and the prey of other people's greed, the desire to revolt and break away from united Italy would continue to make political life insecure and Italian unity as fragile as it has always been.

Why? The southerners of course want to live better, to live at the minimum standard of Europeans, to solve some of their most urgent problems. They want all this but they especially want something else. They want to see the gap between North and South disappear. They want to live as well as northerners. Anything else is not acceptable. Anything else is dishonourable. They do not understand why their countrymen should have such splendid living conditions, such wonderful factories, such awe-inspiring hospitals, and so much money, and why such things should be less impressive in the South. Southerners will never be placated until the difference is erased. The difference, naturally, cannot be erased, for a number of reasons.

TO BEGIN WITH, a part of every lira spent to improve the South goes North. From the North come the specialists, the engineers, the contractors, the skilled workers for certain jobs. From the North comes practically all the machinery for new plants and installations. From the North, finally, come almost all the consumer goods, automobiles, scooters, shirts, clothes, shoes, furniture, radios, television sets, which southerners increasingly can afford. In fact, even if they come from southern manufacturers, the fact is kept secret, as southern buyers think it is safer and more honourable to wear or consume things made in North Italy.

Take the *"cassate alla siciliana"* now being eaten in Sicily. They come from Milan. They are not half as good as the local cassate. But they come in any given quality, at any given time, delivered by refrigerated truck to the smallest village, cost little enough, are sanitary, and bear well-known brand names that are nationally advertised. The infinitely better local products, which could sweep Europe if properly handled, can now be found only in a few old-fashioned cafés. As a result of all this, while the South progresses by inches, the North (which also has at the same time local clients' and foreign customers' increasing demands to satisfy) progresses by miles.

Then there is the greater vigour and adaptability of the northern economy, which is the fruit of private initiative more than that of state intervention. In the South all decisions for the creation of industries or the construction of workers, are the result of charitable politics. Politics determine what plants will rise and where, what people will run them, and what money shall be allotted to them. In the North, on the other hand, everything is instead the heartless result of technical experience, the laws of the market-place, and ruthless competition. The southerners, who, as I have suggested, are more efficient in political manœuvres, fill the high bureaucratic posts, and know how to exploit political advantages. The slower and duller northerners can only rely on their own capacities and resources. The result is an uneven race, a race between a puppet manœuvred by wires from high and a live if more obtuse man. Finally, there is the national character of southerners which acts as stumbling-block.

AS LONG as the South does not really want prosperity, but moral equality with the North, it spends its efforts and money, as it has always done, not on strictly economic aims but on the display of newly acquired, or not yet

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acquired, power and prestige. The factories being built are sometimes not factories but monuments to the god Progress or to the goddess Industrialisation, visible demonstrations that the city or region is to be considered no longer backward but one of the richest, most modern, and progressive in the world.

It is not surprising, therefore, that such investments do not produce strictly economic results. The *Mezzogiorno* is not getting rich as fast as it could, with the money dedicated to it. What is surprising and disappointing is that the psychological effects on which southerners prefer to lavish their own and other people's money were not fully achieved either. What is surprising and disappointing is the discovery, which is being gradually made, that only investments dictated by strictly northern criteria can, in the long run, produce stable psychological, moral, and political results, and one day really solve the *"Problema del Mezzogiorno."*

CAN SOUTHERNERS LEARN to follow strictly economic considerations in the pursuit of their psychological aims? Can they abandon their old ways? Can they become somebody else? They can, with time. Up to now, they still cling as much as possible to their traditions, while bitterly protesting whenever they feel the modern world leaves them behind. They want at the same time to live in the Arcadian past of the Bourbon kings and in the present day of cheap and convenient goods. They want to produce as their grandfathers did in the South and consume as their contemporaries do in the North.

Love Territory

He's timid with women, and the dusk is excruciating,
The bronze-brown autumn dusk,
And the half-lit territories of street and bed and heart
Are savage and full of risk.

On bronze nights
When the territory is half-lit by casual glances
He sweats, each step is hideous!
Once he knows his strength of course he will be ruthless.

Bedrooms—he'll force an entrance,
On an evening full of leaves and blood and water,
By the elemental half-light of a passing glance.

Oh these brown nights are excruciating!
When the quarter's full of gold air, very cold to breathe,
Lovers embrace at dusk with an enlightened coarseness
That makes the frigid grind their teeth.

In the deep bronze, when he goes out to acquit himself
It's treacherous and elemental
In the half-dark of a street, a bed, a heart.
And also modern, young, and gentle.

Rosemary Tonks

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Nigel Dennis

Hanging Day

Awake my soul, and with the sun
The daily course of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

I AM SURE nobody will feel that I am feeding them a sort of party propaganda if I say that when an act of justice is carried out, a people should feel better rather than worse. When, for example, a man who has blackmailed an unfortunate person for many years is caught by the law and sentenced to some years in prison, we should feel buoyed up and encouraged by his fate. When we look at his judge's photograph in our daily paper and read that judge's words on the abhorrence of the crime —"It is parasites such as you . . ." ". . . the torture which you have inflicted on one of your fellow-Christians . . ."—we should feel that that honourable face is our own face, and that the words that came from its lips were words that we should be proud to speak ourselves. When the police are commended for the skill and dutifulness with which they have brought the criminal to book, we should feel a share of their pride in work well done; and this pride—which is in no way haughty or offensive—should seem to spread inside us until it covers the whole range of civic responsibility: we should feel assured of our country's merits. This sort of assurance is of first importance because it helps to make the rather tedious routine of everyday life seem worthwhile: a sense of justice well done lightens and even gives point to those dolorous, repetitive chores that a woman must do every day; while those who travel to work in the filth and discomfort of up-to-date transportation are encouraged by the thought that justice travels on a higher, cleaner level: such reflections can carry people through many ordinary miseries and even give them the illusion that they are in some way responsible for the high dignity of justice and the modicum of civilisation which it provides. This sense of pride and reassurance should not, I must repeat, be smug and overweening; it must have a decent sobriety in control of it, to prevent us imagining that we live in a society that is too good to be true.

THE PURPOSE OF this paper is to show as plainly as possible that we no longer feel this sense of reassuring dignity when we hear that a man is going to be hanged. There are, of course, some people who *are* reassured by the prospect of a hanging and who go about their daily work with a greater peace of mind and an enhanced self-respect, as if they themselves were about to rise, shortly, to a very respectable position in the world. We must all sympathise with such people because it is clear that in their case, at least, justice *is* doing its work very well and providing, by deciding to hang someone, exactly that extra fillip of personal security and general well-being that is essential to a happy society. It is very wrong to accuse such people of callousness, for it is clear that they are not callous at all; on the contrary, they are highly sensitive to hanging and feel more intensely than others the benefits that must accrue to society from an act which they readily admit is not a pleasing one. Moreover, if we take a companionable attitude towards them, instead of reviling them as harsh and even old-fashioned, we may, in return, ask their tolerance for our own discomfort: they may even agree that hanging should be discontinued if it brings too much wretchedness into the lives of others and, by making justice unpopular, increases the instability of daily life and sends people to work depressed and unhappy.

At this point, the critic intervenes, and says: "You seem to be stressing very much the pain

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you suffer from a person being hanged. Surely that is a very selfish way of looking at hanging?" It is impossible to retort to this critic, because he is almost right. I must, with shame and a sigh, admit that I am no longer able to make an intelligent distinction between what I feel when a man is hanged and what the man feels. The suffering he undergoes in the days before the drop releases him have become so personal to me by now that I would readily have hanging stopped merely in order to spare myself: this is not anti-social, exactly, but it is certainly selfish. Since the number of hangings diminished, many of us have lived much happier lives; but every few months we still have to face up to a hanging and go through a period of weeks that frays the nerves and provokes feelings that we should be much happier without.

In view of this, my wife has suggested that I write this paper on capital punishment in a more personal way than is usual when dealing with this topic. She points out (and I agree) that all attacks on hanging are so partial to the hanged that the feelings of the sympathetic outsider are not considered at all. She and I regard this partiality as understandable and do not intend to become indignant about it; we wish merely to remind those who make the laws that where the suffering of hanging is concerned "we also serve, who only stand and wait." As my wife and I have by now suffered a large number of hangings and feel that there must be many others who have, so to speak, hung together in the same way, I should like to jot down some very ordinary remarks about the feelings we have in the house when we know there will be a Hanging Day and the controls we have developed over the years to keep those feelings within rational bounds. Much of what I have to say will not strike others as very original, but it is not my intention to be original about hanging; except from the hangman it is not a thing that asks for any creative skills. I write simply because my wife and I agree that there are many married couples, particularly young ones, who may be grateful for an old stager's tips on how to by-pass a hanging without too much nervous instability.

FIRST, there is the trial itself, of course, and for this my wife and I never hesitate to declare our gratitude. We are grateful not because we feel that we are watching justice in lordly motion, but because the vulgar excitement—which we share in, as much as anyone—turns justice into a sort of brilliant amusement and hides the unpleasantness of the outcome under a lot of paper, ink, and photographs. So long as everything is being conducted in this carnival spirit, with many of the participants in costume, we feel quite safe from horror and our nerves are not distressed at all. Indeed, my wife often says that she would like trials to go on much longer than they do, because the longer justice takes in a capital case, the longer we are able to keep it out of the house. There is no denying the selfishness of this; our respite is purchased at the price of great nervous wear and tear on the part of the murderer and the witnesses, and a long trial costs a great deal of public money. Nevertheless, in capital cases, no trial can be too long for me and my wife.

What we are trying to postpone is the period that follows the death sentence. This is when we first become *engaged*, as the philosopher says, and realise that we are "in for it." And yet, I shall not pretend that this period is too distressing: we hold up our heads very well and ask no sympathy. For there is still a lot of justice to be done: there is all the business of the appeal, and, when that has been turned down, there is the Home Secretary, on whom we depend far too much. Indeed, since I am speaking so frankly here, I may as well admit that the whole course of justice seems negligible to me and my wife *until* the case has reached the Home Secretary: this, of course, is because until the case has reached him, we have managed to avoid letting it reach us.

It is always a bad morning when we hear that he, too, can think of no good reason why the man should not be hanged. I mention his decision casually to my wife and she nods back with the same casualness: this is our proven way of bracing ourselves quickly for the worry to come. Moreover, there are a good many days to go before we are entirely sucked in: a week seems a long time when it occurs prior to a death and we know that during much of it we shall be able to go about our work as if nothing was in the air. The thought that something dreadful *will* happen does pop up occasionally, of course, bringing with it ugly images and the rather fierce, baffled thoughts that trapped animals are supposed to have; but while there's life there's hope: there is hope for *us*, that is to say, and we find hope all-important during the no-reprieve period of justice.

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The day before the hanging actually takes place is the most demoralising one. It starts off much as any other day, but by the afternoon and evening the selfish alarm system goes off every half hour. Long experience, fortunately, has trained us to detachment from things that we can do nothing about and has taught us, too, that at desperate moments it is essential to be as steady and methodical as possible. By concentrating on very ordinary and matter-of-fact things, my wife and I get through nearly the whole day without thinking too much about hanging, nor have we ever found that we ate less well, or laughed less. In fact, the only thing we know we must face up to—and we know from long experience that this is inescapable—is how to get to sleep without being in suspense about hanging and, most important of all, how to wake up next morning late enough for it to have taken place. So far, we have had luck on our side all the way and, although we are both in our late sixties, cannot recall a single hanging that we were awake for. Or, if there were occasions when we woke in time for a hanging, we cannot remember *realising* it, let alone counting the minutes or anything like that: we have always been blacked out in one way or another at the critical hour, in some form of deep unconsciousness. In fact, we have woken to nothing worse than a sort of feeling of being part of a national indignity, and this discomfort has often worn off by the end of the day. A certain heaviness persists until the end of the week; but thereafter, morning is once again the morning we appreciate and for which we may wake as early as we please.

I ATTRIBUTE the relative lightness of our suffering to a combination of discipline and sixth-sensitivity: over the years we have learnt not to talk very much as Hanging Day approaches, and not to interrupt each other's silent concentration on subjects that carry the mind away from hanging. Yet I must mention here as strongly as possible that what I call "concentration" must never be so obvious as to undo the good work by making itself stand out like a sore thumb. To give an example: the day before Hanging Day *must* be treated like an ordinary day. One *must* concentrate on ordinary things that one would be concentrating on anyway, whether hanging was in the offing or not. One should continue reading the same book, or listening to the same music. The dog's walk should be neither longer nor shorter; energy should be neither cossetted nor drained. If it is one's habit to drink coffee after dinner, one should drink it as usual: it is fatal to fear that on this night of all nights, coffee may prevent one from sleeping. Our systems are so made that they respond very rudely to an abrupt change: deprive them of something to which they are accustomed and they will not hesitate to report the loss, arousing internally the very tumult that one is doing one's best to keep at a distance.

Of course, the season of the year can do much to help or hinder the work of concentration. When Hanging Day falls in springtime, or during the summer, it is always harder to shake off than it is in the winter months. I cannot say why this is so, but I think there must be a psychological reason why hanging is easier to swallow when the days are so short, anyway, the light so brief, the grass and trees so dead, and all the doors and windows shut. It is the very long days and the persistence of sunlight that give hanging its best chance of making headway, and we have found this to be the case even in a wet June. To have a garden to work in is a great blessing when the hanging is a summer one: it is also, fortunately, the best time for a woman to make distracting use of her clothes-line.

But my wife points out (and I agree) that our case is easier than other people's. A sedentary, bookish pair, living in the country with a dog, is a different case from that of the man and woman who have daily contact with civilisation, which is why we suspect that Hanging Day is proportionately more painful for people who must go out to work and rub shoulders with other Englishmen. A stay-at-home husband can work hand-in-glove with his wife: by unspoken agreement they can dodge saying things that will raise the living image prior to execution and, after it is over, refrain from raising the ghost until time has done a little healing work. But this is impossible, probably, for men and women packed in crowded trains and assembling together for work. They are up and about when the hanging is taking place. They pass clocks and hear them striking. They cannot depend on the tact and discipline of strangers, many of whom feel the need to speak of the unspeakable, and so to link their emotions with those of others—a fatal mistake, of course. Yet one would not deny that a brisk discussion of the pros and cons of the departing case can

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serve better than a strained silence to ease the nerves and smooth the traveller's passage into the safer, later hours of the morning: even humour has been known to help. And for those that can have it on, the wireless is a godsend. True, it announces that there has been a hanging, but it proceeds immediately to livelier subjects.

The man who defends hanging is likely to interrupt at this point and ask politely if I *really* think that hanging should be stopped merely in order to make life more supportable for me. He may also point out, with sound justice, that I have shown by my own words how stoutly my wife and I can "take it" and that it is rather much to ask that we be relieved officially of a pain that we have succeeded for nearly half a century in keeping to a minimum.

This is quite true: my wife and I feel toothache much more than hanging. And yet, somehow, we still feel that we should *not* have to undergo all this tension every time a man is hanged. We feel that there should *not* be certain days and weeks of each year during which ordinary people should have to call on their minds and emotions to sustain them in the course of justice. Justice, as I said at the beginning, *is* meant to encourage people; it is not there to plunge thousands of healthy persons into regular bouts of depression and leave them feeling for at least some days that they have been involved in something ignominious. Why, my wife and I have actually reached the stage where we say on Hanging Day, sometime in the afternoon: "Good! Another man hanged! That's one step closer to when they stop it!" I don't know what genius invented this remark, which is quite common now, but I do know that it is a most accurate comment and quite hits the nail on the head. We *do* all know by now that only by having more hangings can we stop having any hangings; but it will be agreed that when justice advances in such a furtive way, begging for just one or two more necks before it breaks with tradition, it is bound to look oafish and even to seem untrustworthy—certainly, I, personally (and my wife agrees), get little encouragement from the hope that if another two dozen people are hanged, the law may find the strength to take a turn for the better. Indeed, to be *entirely* honest, my wife and I sometimes have an almost panicky feeling that the law is putting *our* nerves to the test, and that until *we* crack up under the strain of hanging, the law will feel morally obliged to go on doing it. This means, of course, that hanging will be abolished only if my wife and I go mad, and this, unfortunately, is a sacrifice that we are now too old to risk. Thanks to a lifetime of Hanging Days, the trick of emotional control is now an iron habit with us, and though we are prepared to believe that our madness might be an *aid* to justice, we cannot persuade ourselves that madness would suffice to make it sane.

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The Analytic Attitude

By Philip Rieff

> *"A man who is going to live a full life must allow his desires to become as mighty as they may be and never repress them. When his passions have come to full maturity, he must be able to serve them through his courage and intelligence, and gratify every fleeting desire as it comes into his heart."*
>
> CALLICLES TO SOCRATES (GORGIAS, 492)

THERE ARE WRITERS who, in the eccentricity of their ideas, express not only the full logic of their own developed talents but repeat the secret longing of every age: to submit wholeheartedly to the sweet tyranny of pleasure. From time to time, spokesmen for the dream-world have appeared, so talented that in their fiction they have made the full life Callicles describes less like a Hobbesian nightmare and more like the one reality worth creating. D. H. Lawrence's doctrinal polemics against Freud clarify the piety towards pleasure otherwise implicit in his art. From being a gifted psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich developed into the imaginative founder of a dubious therapeutic faith. His case history shows psychotherapy, no less than art, drawn dangerously near becoming a challenge to the present meaning and value of life. In order to complete himself as an artist, Lawrence felt compelled to become something of a therapist. In order to complete himself as a therapist, Reich became something of an artist, mixing saving fantasy with dismal fact. Both found themselves asking the religious question.

The religious question can be asked in various ways: in terms of the good, true, and beautiful (Socrates); by reference to how, and by whom, we are to be saved (Christ); through tracing a line of historical development towards justice (Marx). Because, as a therapist, he refused to ask the religious question, or announce a characterological ideal, Freud earned the polemical hatred of Lawrence, Jung's schism, Reich's progressively more radical revisions. Try as he might, Reich could not avoid finding a theology at the end of his therapy, an ideal character at the end of his analytic theory. Reich's pathetic struggle to frame the great question in a scientific way illustrates how powerfully psychotherapy is tempted beyond the grim safety of diagnostic analysis into the creative danger of doctrinal synthesis.

Freud never felt tempted. His genius was analytic, not creative. At its best, psychoanalytic therapy is devoted to the long and dubious task of rubbing a touch of that analytic genius into less powerful minds. Here is no large new cosset of an idea, within which Western men can comfort themselves for the inherent difficulties of living. Freud's was a severe and chill anti-doctrine, in which the final dichotomy to which men are prey—that between an ultimately meaningful and meaningless life —must also be abandoned. Thus, Freud prescribed specially to his patients, but really to men in general, the "analytic attitude."

WITH SUCH AN ATTITUDE, men could not change the world (which was unchangeable anyway) but could at least change themselves. That change is hard enough to make, in therapy; to maintain the analytic attitude, in life, becomes the most subtle of all ethical mandates, and so the most difficult. For the analytic attitude expresses a trained capacity for entertaining multiple perspectives upon oneself. A tolerance of ambiguities, first of all with reference to one's own inner motives, is the Freudian key to a genuinely stable character, suitable for living in a genuinely unstable time, when nothing, not even contradiction, is clear.

All doctrines of maturity which do not lead beyond the condition of being mature lead instead to fresh outbursts of anxiety about the meaning of Life. Stoicism led to Christianity. Freud's doctrine of psychological manhood has created the condition for a fresh outburst of anxiety about the meaning and value of that

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doctrine, particularly among those he influenced who were not given his rare reserve of character.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS was the perfect instrument of that character. When, at last, he found himself, after searching around systematically in various established disciplines, Freud established a new discipline, first of all for himself.

Later, as psycho-analysis became more adaptable, the hidden force of Freud's character operated through the discipline, detached from his person. Psycho-analysis became a transferable art, and therefore something like a science. In sociological terms, psycho-analysis became what I may call here a "negative community," bound together, as are intellectuals in general, by the analytic attitude. Others could be taught what Freud knew for himself—that there is no longer, characteristically, in our culture, an effective community surrounding the individual, softening life often at the expense of stifling it and organising life often at the cost of making it rigid. Psycho-analysis supplied an individual and secular substitute for communal and religious vocation. Where nothing can be taken for granted, and the stupidity of social life no longer saves, every man must become something of a genius about himself.

This is the reason psycho-analysis has appealed so to the intellectual. For there is a curious resemblance between the analyst and intellectual: both have the analytic attitude at the very basis of their vocations. Yet, precisely for this reason, both the analyst and intellectual must feel the futility built into their vocations. They are indeed the only productive members of the negative community. The classical communities, created within civilisations of authority, are disappearing—more accurately, they are becoming disfunctional. Freud understood this acutely, in his late essay on *Civilization and its Discontents*. Beyond the negative community all positive ones seem either fraudulent or stupid; nothing in psycho-analysis makes them any the less so. Psycho-analysis belongs to those who have experienced it, but first of all to the analysts who practise it. Thus the community is in the practice, and necessarily excludes those who are not practised, even the patients.

In this sense it is not a science, nor even a transferable art, but depends, I imagine, uniquely on each therapeutic relation. It has nothing to say to the uninvolved, and less to say even to the patient as his involvement lessens and is finally displaced by the tricky memory of involvement.

SINCE A LESS NEGATIVE SENSE of vocation can be trained only in a community blessed with an order of vocations which choose the man, as in a civilisation of authority, the patient, when he is sent out, "cured," can only make himself his own vocation. To the limit of his intellectual and emotional ability, he joins the negative community; he settles down more or less calmly within the isolation of his own heart. This is the condition of his culture, as understood from Tocqueville to Freud.[1] Psycho-analysis has never pretended to be able to cure this condition but only some resultant nervous symptoms. Freud himself realised this: when he rejected the notion of psycho-analysis as a propædeutic to accepting one or another religious community. He imagined an ideal patient, one so strengthened that he could tolerate a return to nothing more compelling than an environment in which the ego could be exercised, rather than a communality to which the ego would be sacrificed.

The young Freud was one of those rare unlucky ones, burdened in youth with the mature wisdom of this age. He was never really young. When, at twenty-three, he remarks to his fiancée, Martha Bernays, on "the absurdity of this world," this is no passing adolescent sadness; it carries the full poignancy of full comprehension about the lonely, competitive world in which he lived, and only deepens with time. Such strokes of wisdom often left him in one of his "wretched moods." But his gift of understanding the world as it is, was, and will be, did not leave him completely exposed and vulnerable. Guarded by his self-image as a scientist, Freud's personal wisdom hardened him over just enough to permit him to remain wise without ever falling over into the jeopardy of demanding an end of wisdom: some synthesis of his analytic attitude that must, as he knew, take him beyond the specific gravity of his intelligence. The perfect nonsense of the artist, or of the religious genius, never appealed to Freud; he chose rather to make imperfect sense. One letter concludes, with final accuracy: "In short, I am evidently an analyst."

ADMITTEDLY, thus to compel his imagination to stay put, short of synthesis, put a severe limitation upon it. But the absurdity of this world could not be balanced, in his opinion, by absurd ideas. To be religious was to be sick, by definition: it is the effort to find a cure where

[1] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II. Tocqueville has made the point in perhaps the greatest single passage describing modern man: "Thus not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart."

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none can possibly exist. For Freud, religion could only be a symptom of what it seeks to cure. Psycho-analysis does not cure; it merely reconciles. Therefore it works best for healthy men, who are willing to sacrifice their precious first sons of thought on the altar of reality.

For those who seek, through analysis, to avoid the sacrifice, therapy must inevitably fail. Psycho-analysis is a therapy for the healthy, not a solution for the sick—except so far as the sick themselves become analysts and find in this therapeutic their personal solution, as Freud did. In his science, Freud overcame the "tiredness" from which he suffered. His recurrent fatigue was (he explained to Martha) a "kind of minor illness; neurasthenia, it is called." Work was the one way out of this tiredness. Thus Freud turned necessity into therapy; there was no other way out, before death, for the community was no longer therapeutic but had become an environment—the arena of conflict. In a sense we can now better understand, there is something to the gross charge that psycho-analysis is the perfect profession for neurotics—but only for extremely intelligent neurotics, those who can learn to inhibit successfully their religious impulse.

"The moment a man questions the meaning and value of life," Freud wrote (in a letter to Marie Bonaparte),[2] "he is sick, since objectively neither has any existence." The analyst, proudly, needed no synthesis.

But Freud needed no synthesis because it was already there, built into his character. More easily than most, if they are truly analytical, Freud could avoid asking the essential question; an answer survived subjectively within him, which he guarded and cherished, although towards the end of his life his own ambivalence towards that answer increased so that he could not resist both analysing and justifying it.

Finally, but with extreme reluctance, in *Moses and Monotheism* he published his private answer. He discovered that although he was not a believing Jew, he remained a psychological one. It was, in fact, Freud's mystique of membership in the Jewish community that protected him from asking too obviously the sickest of questions. His letters are full of obedience to the authority of his ancestry. When Freud goes "every day for three lonely weeks" to contemplate the Moses of Michelangelo, in a Roman church, it is an act of piety—which must eventuate in a psycho-analytic exercise, of course. Following in Freud's steps, not long ago, I went to that same church in Rome. But, having had the American experience of detachment from all communities, it was Michelangelo's Moses that I saw, not Freud's. Being still attached to his community, the Jew Freud could afford to be merely what he was: an analyst, and that long before psycho-analysis permitted him to cosset his sense of despair in the professionalism of his analytic attitude. At times, before his wish for genius came true, Freud experienced "something like attacks of despondency and fainthearted-ness." At other times he grudgingly admits to Martha his "grey, grim despair," does nothing all day, except perhaps browse in Russian history or some other subject equally remote from his work. On one occasion, he reaches for a passage in Milton, as if it were a shield behind which he could advance again on the unconquerable enemy realities. That passage, cited by the early Freud, has perfect thematic propriety for the later:

> *Let us consult*
> *What reinforcement we may gain from hope;*
> *If not, what resolution from despair.*

But immediately he says to Martha that he has "no use for this mood." Paradise never has been lost, and therefore cannot be regained.

But what of those who are not members of Milton's mysterious community of the elect by desperate resolution? Or of Freud's even more mysterious one? Pity the poor Gentiles; or, if not, pity the half-Gentiles of American intellectual Jewry. Freud was not long on pity; certainly none for the Gentiles. On the contrary, there is an early letter in which he fans his envy, suggesting to Martha that perhaps he will "try and live more like the Gentiles—modestly, learning and practising the usual things and not striving after discoveries and delving too deep." The mood did not persist. Freud was his own ideal Jew, not a half-Gentile of the real Jewish world but a fantasy Moses, lonely and estranged as he leads the large remainder of himself, resisting, through the "magic world of intellect and unhappiness" from one small oasis of rational insight to another, with no promise of a promised land this time around. Such a powerfully useful image of oneself, once deeply buried, is not easily given up. Being a Jew helped Freud protect his analytic attitude.

I SEE NOTHING wrong with finding a way to avoid asking the religious question that is, at the same time, a profession. It is a true mark of genius to be able to so protect oneself inside the structure of one's own thought and yet so design that structure that it can be of public use.

Of course, it is mandatory that the patient, as the ultimate public, have "faith in the

[2] *Letters of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by Ernst L. Freud (The Hogarth Press, 1961), p. 432.

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analyst." Correspondingly, the analyst must have faith in the practice of psycho-analysis. He is the public to whom the doctrine is ultimately directed. Being his own ultimate public, the analyst ought himself to renew his membership in the negative community by re-entering analysis "at intervals of, say, five years." So, Freud concluded, "not only the patient's analysis but that of the analyst himself has ceased to be terminable and become an interminable task." Nevertheless, Freud, already bound in fantasy to the Mosaic community, could not resist, in reality, from trying to build an analytic community.

Here is the first step towards trying to explain the "psycho-analytic movement," which is a most subtle contradiction in terms. Not everyone is capable of enduring life in Freud's ideal Jewish world of interminable analysis. (Not everyone, as Freud asserted, with classical pride, has a "Jewish head.") Although invited to do so by sympathetic followers, like James Putnam, Freud refused to be drawn out from behind the iron severity of his analytic attitude. The shortest step beyond it would involve him, as he well knew, in the search for some guiding principle that would mark the end of analysis and the beginning of synthesis—in short, religion.[3]

To be analytical is to be a realist. It is not required of a realist to be hopeful or hopeless, but only truthful. A significant number of Freud's first and most important followers considered his realism therapeutically limiting; nor did they find that the dynamics of the transference supplied an adequate substitute. They refused to approach reality in Freud's neutralist terms. Religion reappeared, slipped into therapeutic contexts. This was rather easily done, for religion has always had a therapeutic aspect, in one of two ways which it is important to understand.

IT IS ESSENTIAL to the understanding of the function of religion that it presents two alternatives: either the therapeutic control of everyday life, or a therapeutic respite from that very control. On the one hand religion is doctrinal, that doctrine internalised, and functionally anti-instinctual. On the other hand, religion is ecstatic, or erotic; there is a relative absence of doctrinal internalisation, and the religious mood covertly provides opportunity for the instincts to express themselves more directly—in orgiastic behaviour, for example.

Defined as the control of conduct in everyday life, religion must be methodical, systematic. Defined as the remission of that control, religion must be anti-methodical, unsystematic. To the extent that a system spreads, the line between routine and unusual religious experiences grows fuzzy. In effect, religious experience becomes less unusual as it becomes functionally more influential on the conduct of everyday life—not all elements, of course, but those precisely that give some assurance of being saved, whatever that may mean in a particular religious system. This assurance is then concentrated upon, as the basis of good—because efficacious—behaviour.

In order to assure continuity of mood, there must be limits to the expression of it. Religious emotionalism leads to psychic collapse—to that desolate feeling Christians once experienced as "abandonment by God." Historically, various methods exist for maintaining a sense of this assurance, which may have originated in an ecstatic state. All these methods may be fairly called ascetic. All forms of abstinence, for example; or regulation of breathing, or even semi-starvation. Such ascetic devices, if they are functional, prolong, even regularise, the subjective condition of feeling secure. To preserve this sense of ultimate security is the first function of all forms of asceticism, including the classical disciplines of thought-training, which is now called "brain-washing." To preserve themselves, religious doctrines thus ordinarily develop modes of psychological re-training; conversely, all psychological re-training develops some of the characteristics of religious doctrine. History supplies enough examples of that planned evacuation of consciousness which is the essential characteristic, I think, of all systems of therapy.

IF SUCCESSFUL, these therapeutic controls tend to spread out into the culture as a whole. Everyone, in every life activity, must have the correct attitude; and, moreover, every life-activity must be brought to terms with the system of control. Any form of activity that subverts these controls can be judged as incorrect, and dangerous—for example, the arts or sciences. The pentatonic scale was decreed as correct by Confucian doctrine.

All such systems of therapeutic control, limiting the area of spontaneity, are anti-instinctual; what we mean, ordinarily, by religion, are just these systems. I say *therapeutic* because these controls are intended to preserve a certain established level of adequacy in individual social functioning, and to forestall the danger of psychological collapse. Needless to say, such systems of control—whether Christian, Buddhist, or whatever—are authoritarian. The classical modes of anti-authoritarianism revolve around therapeutic respites from control; anti-

[3] Or philosophy, which was merely religion for the timid and the academic.

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authoritarianism, therefore, has been always vulnerable to the charge of being morally subversive.

IN FREUD'S conception, therapy is indeed a mechanism for establishing self-control. But it is morally neutral. Religious, even those that express the remission of control, are never thus neutral. The analytic attitude is an alternative to all religious ones.

Yet, being alternatives, psycho-analytic and religious therapy bear curious resemblances.

Both demand complete honesty in performance. More important, both are ways of finding out what is wrong with oneself. The process of being helped to find out what is the inner wrong involves establishing that personal attitude through which the patient, or the worshipper, becomes more accessible to the sources of help. Finally, therapy and theology converge as ways in which character can be transformed. Being interested in the transformation of character, both are essentially moral in nature. If psycho-analysis is a science, it must be a moral science and not merely a science of morals, as Freud tried to have it. Both Jung and Reich, in their disparate ways, have tried to inflate psycho-analysis, beyond its original therapeutic proportions, into a moral science.

It was perhaps inevitable that some of his followers should grow restive under the restraint of the analytic attitude. The chief Gentile of the psycho-analytic movement, Jung, did not long tolerate the healthy-mindedness that Freud had imposed upon his science. His premature restiveness led Jung to propose, instead, the "adapted attitude." Therapeutically adapted, at least men could reconcile their own particular fantasy life with one or another of those universal and historic forms of fantasy, sometimes memorialised in religions, that Jung calls the "archetypes." The "adapted attitude" would permit the patient to see the analyst with his professional guard down, as another man, no less puzzled and in search than himself. They may even continue the search, for guiding principles beyond therapy, together. Jung therefore represents a conservative, or traditionalist, revision of psycho-analytic doctrine. He is perhaps the most subtle of modern conservatives, trying to save not this tradition or that, but the very notion of tradition, which can be defined, in Jungian terms, as shared archetypes internalised. When the theologians finally catch up with him, they will discover in Jung that psychology for which they have been through a long agony of seeking, as a substitute for all the crumbled ontologies at the foundation of theology.

FOR MORE THAN a century now, theologians have been screening psychologists in the hope of finding one who could rescue theology for them. It was in 1857, writing to his old Oxford tutor, that one of the more honest religious figures of his century, the first Archbishop Temple, put into clear English what had been muddled in German ever since the time of Schleiermacher:

> Our theology has been cast in a scholastic mould, all based on logic. We are in need of, and we are actually being forced into, a theology based on psychology.[4]

Following Pascal, both Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard had tried to psychologise the old theology; both failed because both remained, like Pascal, too apologetically Christian. What the religious feelings needed was a psychological reviviscence that was not specifically Christian but broad enough to permit a fresh Christian apologetic to be read into it. Jung has supplied that psychology; there remains only for apologists to use it for their own purposes.

The greatest psychologist of our century, Freud, was all but oblivious to this need among the religious. When Freud did hear the call, late in life, he anathematised it in *The Future of an Illusion* and rendered it peculiar and un-Christian in *Moses and Monotheism*. Jung, his one-time heir apparent, has never been hostile to the theologians. Not that, in his writings on religion, Jung has played the believing Protestant, as Freud played the unbelieving Jew. Jung has been far too intent on supplying a new basis for religiosity to be either extremely polemical or mysteriously personal, as Freud was with *Moses* in the ambivalence of his final effort to confront the religious question in his own life by transforming it into a purely psychological one.

NO ONE CAN recognise the exact wording of Jung's title to greatness. However it may be explained and qualified, the legitimacy of that title will depend in part upon the success of his attempt to instal a psychology where once ontology reigned.

Religious appreciation of Jung grows slowly. The simple and the sophisticated both are rightly suspicious, and for what amounts to the same reason; the simple because Jung encourages religiosities other than their own, the sophisticated because Jung encourages any religiosity as if all are merely therapeutic. Religion, thus rendered functional, loses therapeutic effect. But the majority of religious in America now understand their faith strictly in terms of its therapeutic effect. For them Jung would be a godsend. Yet they are deterred from turning to Jung by the general hostility towards

[4] *Memoirs of Archbishop Temple*, II, p. 517.

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him precisely for his traditionalist revision of psycho-analysis. Timid, busy, and badly educated as they are, the professionally religious have had neither the time nor the intellectual energies necessary to realise that the man for whom they have waited for more than a century is now among them, that a fluid psychology of archetypes stands waiting for them to adapt and popularise where once they could point only to archaic theologies, stiff and unanswering even to the warmest, most personal appeal.

Jung has himself understood the importance of his offer. In his own experience as a therapist, Jung has discovered a fresh source for the familiar mood of discontent among the civilised. That discontent is no longer with rigid and outworn meanings, still clamped down tightly upon our vital impulses. Not the repressions, but the permissions trouble us now. It is "the meaninglessness of life that causes the disturbance in the unconscious." As for Jung's patients over the age of thirty-five, so for mature civilisation the "problem" is "in the last resort" finding "a religious outlook on life." This is no doctrine of maturity, like Freud's, with its acceptance of meaninglessness as the final product of analytic wisdom. As a protestant against the severity of the analytic attitude, Jung has taken a dangerous road, towards some new summit of saving nonsense. The normality of disillusion, a controlled sense of resignation, which was the most for which Freud had hoped, appears to Jung the beginning rather than the end of therapy. He proposed to continue beyond the point where Freud felt any honest analyst must leave off. Therefore, Jung has gone about his self-appointed task of finding a new "meaning" for it all, paradoxical enough to be at once analytic and religious. Jung has pushed the therapeutic question beyond the limit arbitrarily set by Freud. Having first raised for therapeutic consideration the question of community, Jung has never managed to escape back behind the professional *persona* of the analyst. He has become instead, to the limit of his ability, a synthesist. His constructions may be shaky, the ground of community mysterious—but this revision of Freud is undoubtedly important, at least to those who cannot sustain an interminably analytic attitude.

For any reader accustomed to the elegance and coherence of Freud's style, or indeed to the clean lines of good English prose, a few pages of Jung can be a discouraging experience. He is discursive, pompous; his style varies from sermonette through excursus to the main point again, which is then repeated as though writing were the transcript of a long hortatory conversation with a sleepy disciple. Jung is an erudite in the 18th-century sense of the word. Instead of Freud's interminable analysis he has the habit of interminable associations. Probably, he leaves no note unused; nothing can be left out because, being analytically sophisticated, Jung knows that nothing historical, viewed psychologically, has merely antiquarian interest. Being filled on almost every page with the heaped rubble of incidental erudition, all made relevant and connected by his sense of their import as strata of psychological meaning, Jung's collected works are formidable for the wrong reason. The modern reader has been trained to treat as obstacles to comprehension just that erudition in which 18th-century readers delighted, as monuments that indicated that this way to truth was worth taking—the longer way round the better. Moreover, too often Jung dogmatises where the reader of English prose expects explanation or at least tight argument.

Nevertheless, once having understood his conservative purposes, Jung cannot be considered a dogmatic writer. His ventures in the field of directly religious commentary are more tentative and exploratory, because more questing, than were Freud's. He has tried something that Freud, in his professional neutralism with respect to values, deliberately avoided: a psychotherapeutics that leads beyond itself. To those who have abandoned the quest, or re-formulated it so that the direction is neither upwards towards God nor downwards towards the Unconscious, Jung's total effort can mean little or nothing—even perhaps being nearly nonsensical.

There are those who suffer from what Jung calls "the urban neurosis of atheism," for whom this suffering is less painful than the cure of religion. Travellers towards the emotional left of the moral party system will not readily agree that the historic gods, far from being a negation of the individual's desire to complete himself, are "actually the strongest and most effective 'position' the psyche can reach." Jung is here assuming that every man and every culture has, built in, a god-term. From this it follows, for Jung, that the "strongest and therefore the decisive factor in any individual psyche compels the same belief or fear, submission or devotion which a God would demand from man." The object of therapy, in the Jungian sense, is, therefore, to reconcile the individual to whatever authority he carries within himself. Such an authority is inescapable; the wise man reconciles himself to it. Indeed, in therapy, one seeks just that authority which experience, now set in a confusedly anti-authoritarian frame, has hidden from the individual, sick just in that degree in which he cannot find the authority directing his inner life.

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JUNG could not have moved farther than this from Freud's position. Culture, Freud thought, may be inherently authoritarian; but for just this reason it is the interminable task of analysis to break the holds of authority on the psyche. To learn, from Jung, that "anything despotic and inescapable is in this sense 'God,'" will amuse the majority who believe that, with or without Freud, they have escaped their "God," and yet alienate the minority still anxious to learn a method of escape. Freud has bred a generation no longer willing to commit itself, as Freud himself did, to the belief that culture must be accepted as the despotic and inescapable god. The uncommitted may be called neo-Freudian, because they trust the instincts and suspect the culture. Of course, Freud prepared the way for the neo-Freudians; the cost of being cultured is, after all, a doctrinal point of major consequence to Freud. On the other hand, Freud's view of culture as despotic was never complemented by a doctrine of the instincts as benign. The neo-Freudians should be more accurately called neo-Reichians, for it was Reich who first shifted the Freudian attack entirely from instinct to culture. There is a curious Marxism among the neo-Freudians that needs careful explanation. Reich may well have been first Freudo-Marxist, as he titled himself; but he was not the last. In contrast to Reich's original bolshevik stridency, the neo-Freudians were calmly social-democratic—but Marxist nonetheless.

In Jung, Adler, Rank, Reich and many others among his early followers, Freud's analytic patience ran out; they wanted something more than a middle way between mere emergency treatment and the illusion of a permanent cure. Each sought to combine analysis with a therapy of commitment complete with symbolic or real returns to some saving community—Christian, Marxist, or merely Reichian, for example. All these schismatics have a certain analytic power, although far inferior to Freud's; more important, all have the authority of experience on their side, for it is probably the community that cures.

Freud never objected to alternative therapies, if they worked. His rejection of commitment therapies derives not so much from wounded vanity at having been abandoned by favoured disciples as from his belief that there were no longer communities into which men could safely invest their troubled emotions with the hope that these would return some higher dividend.

Reflected Light

I have come to the time that has more of the moon than the sun—
The road leads on through night,
The time of reflected light,
Recollection of remembered longing and delight.
Oh, but for my darling, my dear,
How truly I were alone:
The faces from which love smiled at me
Are taken, one by one—
Many whom I have loved are gone.
I think of them every day,
Of her who cast crazy life away,
Of him who died with promises still to keep;
And sometimes I think of you
With whom youth died too,
With whom the morning-stars fell asleep.

John Hall Wheelock

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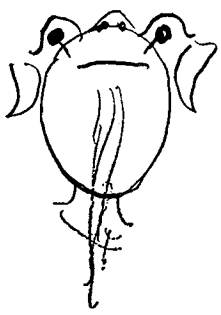
MUSIC

On "Oedipus Rex"

By Igor Stravinsky



I DATE the beginnings of my *Oedipus Rex* from September, 1925, but as early as five years before that time I had been aware of the need to compose a large-scale dramatic work; I have already said that Sophocles' play had attracted me in my youth. Returning from Venice to Nice in September, 1925, I stopped for a few days in Genoa, to renew memories of the city where I had spent my fifth wedding anniversary, in 1911. There, in a book kiosk, I saw a life of Francis of Assisi which I bought and, that night, read. To this reading I owe the formulation of an idea that had occurred to me often, though vaguely, in the years since I had become a *"déraciné."* The idea was that a text for music might be endowed with a certain monumental character by translation backwards, so to speak, from a secular to a sacred language. By sacred I mean, at the lowest level, older; thus, the language of the King James Bible is more sacred than the language of the New English Bible, simply because it is older. I also thought that an older, even an imperfectly remembered, language might contain an incantatory element that could be exploited in music. The actual confirming example from Francis of Assisi was the Saint's hieratic use of Provençal, the poetic language of the renaissance of the Rhône, in contrast to his quotidian Italian, or Brass Age Latin. Prior to that illuminating moment in Genoa I could not see how to resolve the problem of language in my future vocal works. Russian, the exiled language of my heart, had become musically impracticable, and French and German were temperamentally alien to me. When I compose words in music my musical appetite is set in motion by the sound rhythms of the syllables; in all of my vocal music, "In the beginning was the word" is a literal, localised truth. My search for a *"pur langage sans office"* (St.-John Perse) ended with my rediscovery of Ciceronian Latin.

The decision to compose a work on the play by Sophocles followed quickly upon my return to Nice, but the choice was preordained. I wanted a universal plot, or, at least, one so well-known that I would not have to elaborate its exposition; I wished to leave the play, as play, behind. I thought to distil the dramatic essence by this, and to free myself for a greater degree of focus on a purely musical dramatisa-

MR. ROBERT CRAFT, *who published a first series of "Conversations with Stravinsky" several years ago (Faber, now reprinted by Penguin), continues his talks with the composer, who will be celebrating his 80th birthday this month. Here Mr. Craft's questions included:*

"What do you recall of the circumstances that led to the composition of Oedipus Rex? *To what extent did you collaborate with Cocteau on the scenario and the text? What were your reasons for translating the libretto into Latin, and why Latin rather than Greek —or, if Latin, then why not directly from Greek? What were your original ideas for staging the work and why have they never been realised? What did you mean by opera-oratorio? How would you identify the religious character of the work, if you agree with those people who profess to hear religious elements in it? Would you discuss what you call the musical manners of the piece? And, what more can you contribute to performance knowledge, and to the history of the work in performance?"*

Mr. Stravinsky dedicates this essay to T. S. Eliot.

The drawings (excepting, of course, the "self-portrait") are by Jean Cocteau.

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tion. Greek myths came to mind first, as I considered subjects, and then, almost in automatic succession, I thought of the play that had moved me most in my youth. (Later, in a moment of doubt, I reconsidered the possibility of using a modern language version of one of the myths, but only *Phèdre* fulfilled my conception of the statuesque, and what musician could breathe in the metre of *Phèdre*?)

I INVITED COCTEAU'S collaboration because I admired his *Antigone*. I told him what I had in mind, and warned him that I did not want an action drama but a "still life," and that the libretto would have to be conventional, though convention, I knew, was not exactly his most famous point. He appeared to be enthusiastic about everything except my idea that his text was to be turned into Latin, but the libretto he sent me was precisely what I did not want: a music drama told in a horribly meretricious prose.

("Music drama" and "opera" have long since blurred together but they were clear categories in my mind at that time; I even subscribed to the extenuating notion that the orchestra must have a larger and more exterior interpretive role in "music drama." I would now replace these divisions by "verse opera" and "prose opera," and define my terms by pure examples such as *The Rake's Progress* for the type of the former, and *Erwartung* for the type of the latter. Categories of this sort, however factitious, seem to be necessary to my dialectical form processes.)

Cocteau was infinitely patient with me and my criticisms. He twice rewrote the whole book and even then submitted it to a final shearing. (I am a topiarist at heart, and my love for clipping things is almost a mania.) What was purely Cocteau's? The shape of the libretto is perhaps less his than the style, the gesticulation of the phrasing. (I do not refer to the device of repeating words, which is mine.) The idea of the speaker is his, too, and the notion that the speaker should wear a *frac* and comport himself like a *conferencier* which has too often meant, in practice, like a master of ceremonies. But music goes beyond words, and the music was inspired by Sophocles, not Cocteau.

I HAD BEGUN to visualise the staging as soon as I had started to compose the music. I saw the chorus first, seated in a single row from one end to the other of the proscenium rainbow. I thought that they should seem to read from scrolls, and that only these scrolls and the outlines of their cowled heads were to be seen; my strongest conviction of all was that the chorus should not have a face. My second idea was that the actors should stand on elevated platforms, each at a different height, behind the chorus, but "actor" is the wrong word, for no one "acts," and the only person who moves at all is the narrator, and he merely to show his detachment from the other stage figures. *Oedipus* may or may not be an opera by virtue of its musical content, but it is not at all operatic in the sense of movement. The people in the play relate to each other by words, not by gestures, and they do not turn to attend each other's speeches but address themselves directly to the audience. They stand rigidly, and in my original version were not even allowed their exits and entrances. One of my first conceptions was that the people of the play should be revealed from behind small individual curtains, though I realised, later, that the same effect might be accomplished more easily by lighting. Like the Commendatore, the singers would be illuminated during their arias and become vocally, not physically, galvanised statues. Oedipus himself should stand in full view throughout, except after his *"Lux Facta Est"* when he must change masks; he could be recountenanced behind his individual curtain, or in the dark. His self-violence is described, not enacted. He should not move, and those directors who whisk him offstage and then bring him back realistically staggering in an unreal, stylised, costume have understood nothing of my music.

I AM OFTEN ASKED why I should have tried to compose a waxworks opera. My answering-service answer is that I abhorred, and continue to abhor, *verismo*, but a complete reply would be more positive, and much more complex. For one thing, I considered the static representation a more vital way to focus the drama not on Oedipus himself and the other individuals, but on the "fatal development" which, for me, is the meaning of the play. From my point of view, Oedipus, the man, is a subject for a type of symbolic treatment that depends upon the interpretation of experience and is principally psychological. This did not attract me as musical material, but if it had been my main interest I would surely have constructed the drama differently, and added scenes from the childhood of the Prince. My audience is surely not indifferent to the fate of the person, but it is far more concerned with the person of the fate. I think that the delineation of the latter can be achieved uniquely by music, but as far as the staging may help, the stage figures are more dramatically isolated and helpless precisely because they are plastically mute, and the portrait of the individual as the victim of circumstances becomes by this static presentation more starkly effective.

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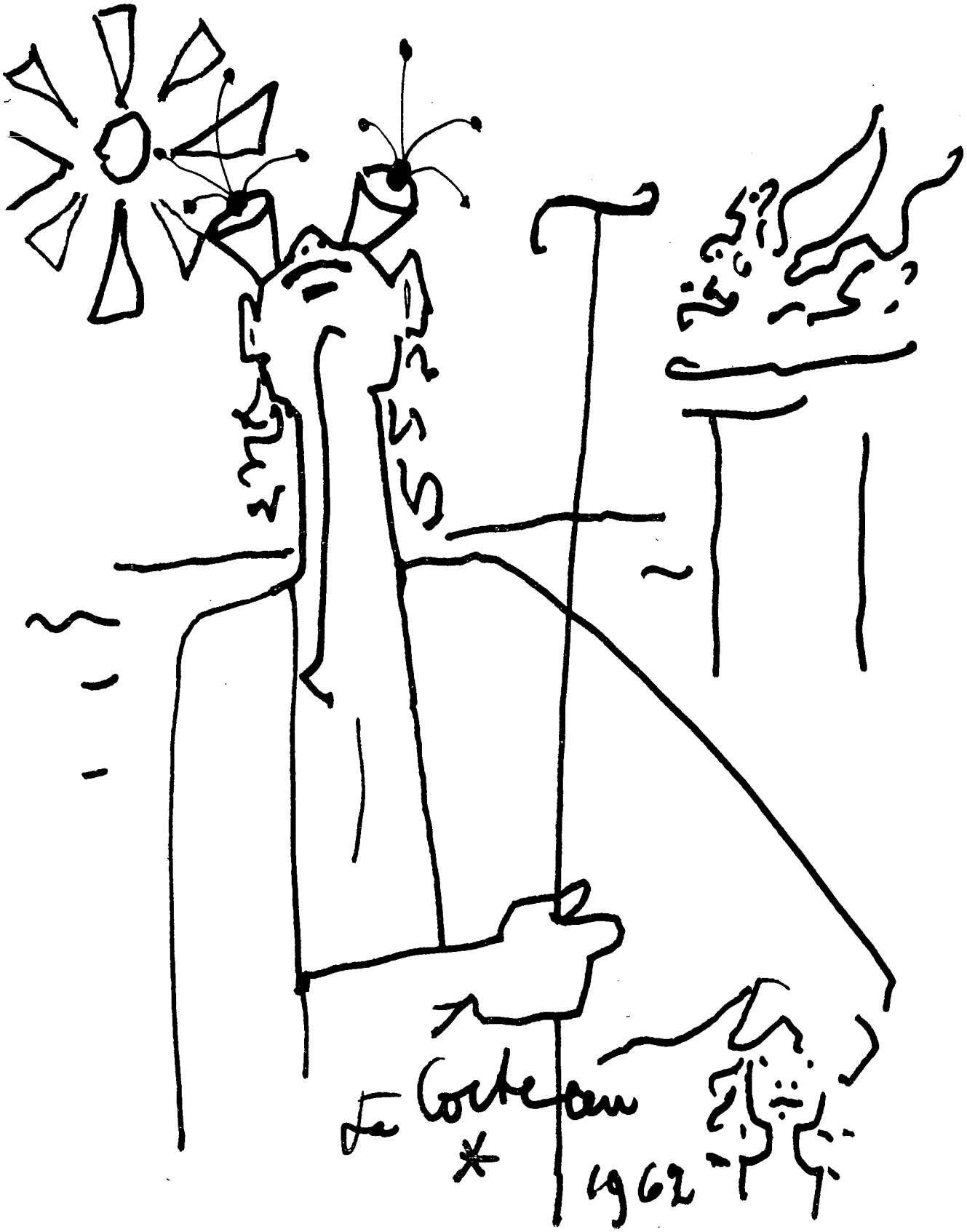

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Oracles and crossroads are not personal but geometrical, and the geometry of tragedy is what interested me, the inevitable intersecting of lines.

I have sometimes been asked why I failed to take one more step and to use puppets, as my late friend Robert Edmond Jones once did for a performance of my *Oedipus* in New York. This idea did occur to me, and I had been greatly impressed by Gordon Craig's puppets when he showed them to me in Rome, in 1917. But I am also fond of masks, and while I composed Oedipus's first aria I already imagined him wearing a roseate, ogival one, like that of a Chinese sun god. (When I composed the Devil's music in *The Flood*, incidentally, I imagined the singer in a transparent costume, like a scorpion.)

My ideas for staging[1] were not realised for the reason that Diaghilev did not have time to mount the work at its première, and because the first performance was in concert form many people wrongly thought that I preferred the work unstaged. *Oedipus Rex* was composed as a present for Diaghilev in honour of the twentieth anniversary of his Ballet. (*"Un cadeau très macabre,"* he called it.) Its existence was kept secret from him until the last moment, and I was so late in finishing the score that the singers had hardly learned the notes before the piano preview performance which took place at Edmond de Polignac's house a few days before the public one. I accompanied the singers myself at this Polignac *soirée*, and from the reactions of the *mondain* guests I foresaw that *Oedipus* was not going to amuse the Parisian public. When my austere vocal concert was programmed next to a very colourful ballet, however, the failure was greater than I had anticipated. The audience was hardly more than polite, and the sganarelles of the press were a lot less than that: *"...celui qui a composé Pétruchka nous présente avec cette pastiche Handelienne..."*; *"...un tas de gens mal habillés ont mal chanté...." "La musique de Créon est un marche Meyerbeerienne,"* etc. Performances were rare in the next two decades, accordingly, though since then they have been more and more frequent.

I should note that Diaghilev himself was cool to *Oedipus* at the première, but I think this might have been because of Cocteau. He deliberately chose a very handsome, very young man to be the speaker, at any rate, and this was certainly to spite Cocteau who, when composing the play, must have thought of that part for himself.

[1] The remarks in the score only partly represent them.

I HAVE PARTICIPATED myself as a conductor in only a few staged performances, and I have seen few other stagings. (Of recent stagings I should mention the Vienna Opera's where the *"e peste"* sounded as though the singers really did have the plague; and the Washington Opera's, where the chorus' white faces glistened from a rectangular tower like holes in a piece of Swiss cheese.) The performance that has pleased me most, visually, up to now, was Cocteau's in the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, in May, 1952. His masks were superbly imagined and designed, and the whole spectacle would have been perfect but for the intrusion of symbolic choreography. I recall with horror the first staged performances, in the Kroll Opera, Berlin, though they were well prepared musically by Klemperer. The speaker wore a black Pierrot costume. I complained to the director that so far as I understood it, Pierrot was not directly related to *Oedipus Rex*, but his answer was too categorical and too German for further argument: "Herr Professor Strawinsky, in our country only the *Kappelmeister* is allowed to wear a *frack*." Hindemith and Schönberg were in the audience at the Berlin performance, the former *hingerissen*, and the latter—who must have heard nothing in it but empty *ostinato* patterns and primitive triadic harmonies—*abgekühlt*.

IN WHAT SENSE is the music religious? I do not know how to answer because the word does not correspond in my mind to a state of feeling or sentiment, but to dogmatic beliefs. I can only testify that the music was composed during the strictest period of Christian Orthodoxy in my life. When I left Nice to perform my piano Sonata in Venice, at the beginning of September, 1925, I had a severe and suppurating abscess in my right forefinger. I expected to cancel the concert, but before doing so I went to the little Russian church of St. Basil near Nice, and prayed there before an old and "miraculous" Icon. My finger was still festering when I walked on the stage of the Teatro La Fenice, and I addressed the audience, telling them that I could not use my forefinger and that I would probably miss many notes. Then, as soon as I touched the keys, the finger was—miraculously, it seemed to me—healed. (Now I grant that minor "miracles" are more disconcerting than even the most far-fetched "psychosomatic" or analytic rationale, but a miracle is what seemed to have happened to me, and if it was no such thing, then the fact that I took it for that is at least as significant. Christians must believe in a system beyond Nature.)

A few days after this Venetian concert I discovered the book about St. Francis and decided from it to use the language that is also the

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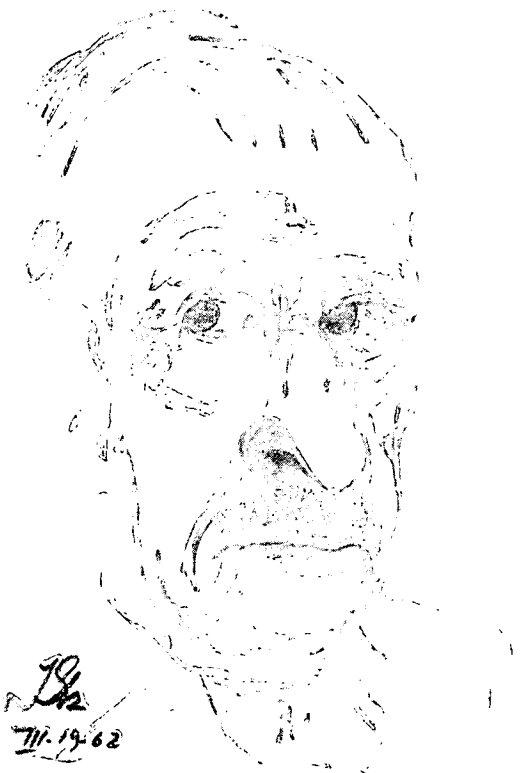
language of the Western church, and shortly after that I chose the archetypal and ecumenical drama of purification. ("With washed eyes /Cordelia leaves you; I know you what you are.") I composed a liturgical-style *Pater Noster* (Russian, but no matter: so is *The Dove Descending* Russian-liturgical) at the same time as *Oedipus Rex*, and I was certainly influenced in the "Gloria" chorus by Russian Church ritual; the Holy Trinity is symbolised by the triple repetitions in this "Gloria" chorus, just as it is in the Kyrie of the Mass but, to begin with, the character of the "Gloria" music itself is ecclesiastical.

ONE EVENT that occurred when I was half-way through the composition is more important than anything else as an indication of my religious temper. In the spring of 1926 I returned from Trieste to Venice—my first airplane flight—and joined the pilgrims to Padua for the 700th anniversary of Saint Anthony. I happened to enter the Basilica just as the Saint's body was exhibited. I saw the coffin, I knelt, and I prayed. I—my terrible ego—asked that a sign of recognition be given when and if my prayer was answered, and as it was answered, and with the sign, I do not hesitate to call that moment of recognition the most real in my life.



After a Self-Portrait by Stravinsky

THOUGH I have been concerned with questions of musical manners all my life, I am unable to say precisely what these manners are. That, I think, is because they are not pre-compositional but of the essence of the musical act: the manner of the saying and the thing said are the same. But am I not unusually conscious of the manner question, nevertheless? Perhaps, but all I can say is that my manners are my personal relations with my material. *Je me rends compte* in them, and through them I discover my laws. The direction of the interval for the next syllable involves, for me, the question of the musical manners of the whole work. Thus the clarinet trill at *"Lux Facta Est"* is a manifestation of the musical manners of *Oedipus Rex*; the trill is not just a trill but an indispensable manner. I have been told, of course, that this is no more than the natural culture-consciousness of the emigré,[2] but I know that it is more than that because I worked and thought in exactly the same way in Russia. My manners are the birthmark of my art.

I BEGAN TO compose according to a plan of gradation for the musico-dramatic development, a recitative-aria scheme in which each aria marked a crucial progress in the story. Each of these dramatic steps was to be accompanied by a downward harmonic step, too, in the tradition of the Baroque composers, though having said that much I must state the fact that I did not begin by referring to any musical models. I do not recall that I had any strong attractions to other composers at the time though, if another composer is suggested in my score, he is Verdi. A great deal of the music is a *merzbild*, to borrow Schwitters' term. I put it together from whatever came to hand.[3]

[2] Not only was I born to a minor musical tradition, but I have had to survive two transplantations to two more minor traditions. I myself helped to exhaust and scuttle the tradition of my birthright. Not political circumstance or the Revolution, but the *cul de sac* of "Russian Music," was the reason for my first removal, to the non-tradition of "French Music," which at that time was almost as eclectic as "Russian Music" and even less "traditional." The second removal was to America.

[3] I mean, for example, the little "games" that occur throughout the score such as the offbeats at No. 50 and the Alberti-bass horn solo accompanying the Messenger. I also mean the fusion of widely divergent types of music such as the Folies Bergères tune at No. 40 ("the girls enter, kicking") and the "Wagnerian" 7th-chord progressions at Nos. 58 and 74. I have made these bits and snatches my own, I think, and I have made of them a unity. "Soule is form," as Spenser wrote, "and doth the bodie

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What were my musical ideas? Well, what *are* musical ideas? Isn't an idea already a formulation, and doesn't something happen prior to formulation? I know that I have a precognitive sense of my material long before I have any "ideas" of how to use it, and I know that this material cannot be imposed upon by "ideas," but that something very like the contrary takes place. My musical "ideas" for *Oedipus Rex* were all derived from what I call the versification—though "ideas" in this case may mean nothing more than what I have already described as musical manners. What is "versification"? I can only answer that by saying that at present I make my "versification" with series as an artist of another kind may versify with angles or numbers.

The score was composed from beginning to end in the order in which it now stands. I was not conscious of the manner question as I composed the first chorus, and when I did begin to understand it, in Oedipus's first aria, I may have established it too exaggeratedly, which is to say, too conventionally. This, I think, was because I realised it would have to be fixed then and there for the whole work. The King's manner conceals the King's "heart"—though not, perhaps, the pride and insufficiency of his ego.

I FRAME THE WORD heart with diacritical marks because I do not believe the Greeks would have used it in our sense or, at least, with our emphasis, and even if they did temperamentalise it, they were careful to balance it in their cosmogony of affective organs by the *hepatos*. (The Greeks must have known that the liver is a regenerative organ, incidentally, though medical science has only recently determined the fact, otherwise Prometheus's punishment would have no retributive meaning—the birds would have had of him no more than a single meal.) But whereas "heart" and "heartless" may have utility —among journalists—"cold," the key word in the usual objurgation against *Oedipus Rex*, is propaganda, verbicide, in fact, through the simple-minded wish to evaluate rather than to describe. What is "warm," please? *Schmaltz?* And is the first canon in the "Goldberg" Variations cold or warm? On such thermometers one reads only the uninteresting mental climate of the critic; they cannot count the calories of the work of art.

Useful criticism should seek to discover the effect on the music of the fact that the harmonic dominant is so often in the minor. It should also analyse, for the same purpose, the nature of my rhythmic manners. The latter are more static and regular than in any other composition of mine to that date. The tension created by static rhythms, in the *Mulier in vestibulo* chorus for example, is greater than any tension irregular, upset rhythms could produce, but precisely that chorus—I call it a mortuary tarantella—has been cited as a piece of inappropriate gaiety, as a ballet coda, even as a can-can—by people who have no manners of their own. The rhythmic manner of the *Oedipus* music is the principal source of dramatic tension and a major element of the dramatic method. Chiefly by rhythmic means have I been able to freeze the drama in the music.

MY LIST OF PERFORMANCE notes is short. I prefer to repeat the "Gloria" chorus after the narrator's speech. I like the music of this chorus, first of all, and I like to go directly from *tutti* G major to *solo* flute and harp G minor. I also like to acknowledge the audience's apprehension that the Queen Mother must have a lot to say by giving them a pause before she says it. I should mention, too—as someone is sure to discover the "original score"—that I much prefer the 1948 version. The revisions were not mere copyright changes, but improvements instituted—in my score, at least—immediately following the first performance. I refer to the added horns and tuba in the *Aspikite* chorus, and the added trumpet in the "Beckmesser" aria, *"Nonne Monstrum."*[4]

I would also caution conductors to look for a small and clear—not "operatic"—voice for Oedipus, and for a singer sensitive to dynamics. The music is lyrical, after all, and the dynamic gradations are extremely important. Oedipus's first aria must be sung quietly, not bellowed, and all of his melismas must be given strict and full rhythmic value.

MY CRITICISMS of *Oedipus*? Criticism is difficult after thirty-five years, but I detest the speaker device as a disturbing series of interruptions, and I do not much like the speeches themselves. *"Il tombe, il tombe de haut"*—from where else, indeed? (The English is not much better, though: "He falls headlong," sounds like the description of a swan-dive.) The line "And now you will hear the famous monologue the Divine Jocasta is dead" is intolerable snobbery. Famous to whom? And no "monologue" follows, but only

make." (And isn't *Le Baiser de la Fée* almost the same thing? Listening recently to a concert of the Tschaikovsky music that was my source material, I almost succumbed to diabetes. What is the relation of that saccharine salon music to *Le Baiser de la Fée?*)

[4] Curious that a Soviet musicologist visiting me recently was convinced that I developed this melody from the cornet waltz tune in *Petroushka*.

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a four word telegram by the Messenger. (And who, by the way, is "the witness to the murder," who steps from the shadows?) The final *"on t'aimait"* is a journalist's caption and blot of sentimentality wholly alien to the manner of the work. But, alas, the music was composed with the speeches, and it is paced by them.

The music? I love it, *all* of it, even the rather tarnished M.G.M. fanfares for four trumpets. Neo-classicism? A husk of style? Cultured pearls? Well, which of us to-day isn't a highly conditioned oyster? I know that it is valued at zero by present progressive-evolutionary standards, but I think it may last a while in spite of them. I know, too, that I relate from an angle to the German stem which evaluates only in terms of where does it come from and where is it going—(Bach - Haydn - Mozart - Beethoven - Schubert - Brahms / Wagner / Mahler - Schönberg).

But an angle can also be an advantage.

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Cocteau

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Five Poems by Robert Graves

Ibycus in Samos

The women of Samos are lost in love for me:
Nag at their men, neglect their looms,
And send me foolish missives, to my sorrow.

I am the poet Ibycus, known by the cranes,
Each slender Samian offers herself moon-blanched
As my only bride, my heart's belovèd;

And when I return a calm salute, no more,
Or a brotherly kiss, will heap curse upon curse:
Do I despise her warm myrrh-scented bosom?

She whom I honour has turned her face away
A whole year now, and in pride more than royal
Lacerates my heart and hers as one.

Wherever I wander in this day-long fever,
Sprigs of the olive-trees are touched with fire
And stones twinkle along my devious path.

Who can blame me that I alone am poet,
That none other has dared accept the fate
Of death and again death in the Muse's house?

Or who can blame me that my hair crackles
Like thorns under a pot, that my eyes flash
As it were sheets of summer lightning?

Between Moon and Moon

In the last sad watches of night
Hardly a sliver of light will remain
To edge the guilty shadow of a waned moon
That dawn must soon devour.
Thereafter, another
Crescent queen shall rise with power—
So wise a beauty never yet seen, say I:
A true creature of moon, though not the same
In nature, name or feature—
Her innocent eye rebuking inconstancy
As if Time itself should die and disappear.

So was it ever. She is here again, I sigh.

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The Meeting

We, two elementals, woman and man,
Approached each other from far away:
I on the lower wind, she on the upper.

And the faith with which we came invested
By the blind thousands of our twin worlds
Formed thunder clouds about us.

Never such uproar as when we met,
Nor such forked lightning; rain in a cataract
Tumbled on deserts dry these thousand years.

What of the meteorologists?
They said nothing, turned their faces away,
Let the event pass unrecorded.

And what of us? We also said nothing.
Is it not the height of silent humour
To cause an unknown change in the earth's climate?

The Wreath

A bitter year it was. What woman ever
Cared for me so, yet so ill-used me,
Came in so close and drew so far away,
So much promised and performed so little,
So murderously her own love dared betray?
But since I must now continue in your debt,
Queen of ingratitude, to my dying day,
You shall be punished with a deathless wreath
For your dark head, resist it how you may.

Name Day

Tears of delight that on my name-day
She gave me nothing, and in return
Accepted every gift I heaped upon her—
Call me the richest man alive!

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POETRY

Shakespeare and the French Poet

By Yves Bonnefoy

I HAVE just been reading Friedrich Walter's essay* in which he compares the original Shakespeare with Schlegel and Tieck's translation into the German. He is in a position to go into details, analysing the reasons why one passage is successful and another a failure, in this great triumph of German Romanticism. Mr. Walter raises interesting questions about the subtle analysis of language and, as a Frenchman, I should be happy to devote myself to exploring our own efforts in this field, but I cannot really believe that the present level of our French translations makes this worth trying. It is not that Shakespeare is unrecognised in France. The French have for quite some time been able to assess his greatness, if for no other reason than because an army of adaptors have attacked this task from all angles, and so many aspects of this work, whose essential characteristic is an extraordinary multifariousness, have now been revealed. In one sense it is probably an advantage that we did not have too soon in France a translation comparable to Schlegel and Tieck, a "classic," beautiful and powerful enough to constrict us within the limited perfection of its own vision. Was the Romantic age really capable of genuinely comprehending Shakespeare? But the fact remains that we have not even yet in France a translation which is both great literature and close to the original—I mean one in which the reader can attain a concrete sense of Shakespeare's marvellous poetry as distinct from the abstract dramatic elements. Remarkable translations of particular plays there are. I may mention, for example, those of Jules Supervielle, Pierre Leyris, the *Romeo* of Jouve and Pitoëff—but they seem piecemeal and inconsistent, when what is needed is an organic whole, a single profound vision combining anew all the aspects of the Shakespearean world, which could only be attempted by one poet working alone with authority and decision.

In other words the French have only been *told about* Shakespeare and, if translating means catching the original tone of voice, that fusion of personal vision and word which makes the poetic dimension, then he has not yet been translated at all. How are we to account for this? I have no doubt that it is worth while looking at the problem from a somewhat theoretical angle and trying to find out if there is not some basic essential cause for this persistent frustration. But to state the problem, I shall first consider the less successful translations: what strikes me most about them, apart from any individual shortcomings, is one serious weakness which they have in common.

ALTHOUGH historically speaking the idea is absurd, it is a lasting pity that no one thought of extemporising a translation in Shakespeare's own day. At the beginning of the 17th century, before Malherbe's influence turned the scale and while the impression of Garnier's breathless verse still lingered, something of the essence of Shakespeare could have seeped into our poetry and modified it, perhaps profoundly. But the taste for classicism very soon barred any genuine understanding of Shakespeare. In an age dominated by Racine one can hardly imagine anyone translating *Macbeth*. And when Voltaire took it upon himself to initiate the French mind into what he called *English Tragedy* (after Corneille and Racine even the word *Tragedy* is charged with overtones which are very remote from anything English), the rendering which he offers of Hamlet's most famous soliloquy is a complete travesty of Shakespeare, just because of that glib and totally

* "Quoting Shakespeare in German: On the Splendours and Miseries of Translation," ENCOUNTER, September, 1961.

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unpoetical Alexandrine which was then prompting decay in the theatre:

Demeure, il faut choisir, et passer à l'instant
De la vie à la mort et de l'être au néant . . .

What is surprising is that, with the intention of giving some idea of Shakespeare's "wood-notes wild," Voltaire should have followed up this doggerel with a literal line-by-line translation which has a kind of beauty of its own, and, in its freedom and flexibility, is related to what we might welcome to-day. In rendering *Or to take arms against a sea of troubles* as *et de prendre les armes contre un mer de troubles* he shows a fine audacity, and in my own translation of *Hamlet* I have paid the unwitting forerunner of all modern translators the compliment of taking over this line. Voltaire, however, put it forward only to cut it out, as if he had to show the kind of excesses from which the French genius had to be protected. And when in the age of Louis XVI, Ducis in his turn composed "imitations" of *Hamlet* and *Othello* which were widely read and often re-issued (I remember they were still to be found in my grandfather's small library), it was from Voltaire that he had learned to cut and re-arrange and simplify Shakespeare's text so that the end-product was a "five-act tragedy" of the utmost regularity and inanity. "I don't understand English"—so Ducis opened his preface, and in fact the original plot is so much distorted that Claudius, to take one example, is turned into Ophelia's father, and we can be fairly sure that this is in order to face Hamlet, after Corneille, with a choice between revenge and love. From the neo-classical point of view of the "Age of Reason," Hamlet's delays had to be justified on rational grounds which were *perfectly clear and distinct.*

Nevertheless Ducis' clear-cut line is to some slight extent shaded off, he has a touch of the Gothic novel, and I must confess that I do not find his renderings altogether intolerable, if only because they illustrate with such perfect clarity the difficulties of translating Shakespeare. Indeed, after Ducis, the problems were more often shelved than solved. After the Revolution until the Second Empire, Shakespeare was continually translated, but in the spirit of a vague Romanticism. Letourneur (between 1776 and 1782), Francisque Michel, Benjamin Laroche, Guizot, François Victor-Hugo, Montégut, all published *Complete Works*, with some progress in accuracy (Letourneur had no objection to cutting out complete scenes and bowdlerising passages which he thought coarse), and even perhaps in felicity—but with a defect which is of course present in Ducis and which is so subtle and elusive that it is not at all easy to describe.

Here is a famous passage from *Henry IV*, the one where Falstaff is in a black mood, repenting of his evil life:

> "Why," he says to Bardolph, "there is it: come, sing me a bawdy song, make me merry. . . . I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be: virtuous enough, swore little, diced not above seven times a week, went to a bawdy-house not above one in a quarter of an hour, paid money that I borrowed three or four times, lived well, and in good compass: and now I live out of all order, out of all compass."

In these few lines, and in the background which they suggest, a world of authentic bawdy-houses and taverns, we are confronted with a real human being talking about himself, and any impression of unreality arises only from the joking contrast he himself makes between his actual way of life and the impression of it he would like to create. Falstaff is completely there in the flesh and whatever universal meaning he attains, the starting-point is the same as that of any other mortal, his individual reality, which persists in vivid unpredictability throughout the entire play. Falstaff is an archetype only because he is in the first place this particular complex and enigmatic personality which we cannot fathom any more than we can really understand any other real human being. And the words seem to lend themselves to this total *thereness.* They seem to be one with the puffing voice, and to be even reabsorbed into the world of sense which they evoke, so that we are left with nothing between us and its raw assertiveness, its undiminished complexity.

But let us now look at a translation, a very meticulous one, by François Victor-Hugo.

> FALSTAFF: *"Oui, voilà la chose. Allons, chante-moi une chanson égrillade. Egaye-moi. J'étais aussi vertueusement doué qu'un gentilhomme a besoin de l'être; vertueux suffisamment; jurant peu; jouant aux dés, pas plus de sept fois . . . par semaine; allant dans les mauvais lieux pas plus d'une fois par quart d'heure; ayant trois ou quatre fois rendu de l'argent emprunté; vivant bien et dans la juste mesure; et maintenant, je mène une vie désordonnée et hors de toute mesure."*

Certainly it is the same passage: the ideas and the references are the same. But there is a world of difference between the original text and the

Yves Bonnefoy is one of France's most distinguished younger poets and is himself the author of a number of well-known translations of Shakespeare's plays and poems. He contributed an essay on "Critics—English and French" to our July, 1958, number.

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translation. Whereas Shakespeare's Falstaff seems actually *in the room*, in the translation he appears distant, insubstantial, dimmed, as if we were looking at him through a window-pane. He is no longer a living being, he is a character in literature, but one striving, by his exuberant language, to resemble life too closely, and hence all the less convincing. In all these translations, all Shakespeare's characters lose their roundness in the same way. Even where Shakespeare's "excesses"—the puns, the bawdy—are scrupulously preserved, the characters seem insubstantial and their speech lacks life. "I feel immortal longings..." is what Shakespeare wrote at the end of *Antony and Cleopatra*. *"Je sens en moi l'impatient désir de l'immortalité"* is Letourneur's version, while *"Je me sens pressée d'un violent désir de quitter la vie"* is Francisque Michel's. Where are we? The words create neither reality nor myth. This is the ghost of Shakespeare.

And yet we need not be in any doubt that these translators chose a prose rendering so as not to be led into the unreality, the unnaturalness and lack of body, characteristic of the Voltaire and Ducis translation. They used prose because it can serve the Romantic aspiration to lay hold of the real in all its heterogeneousness —not only local colour and the picturesque, but the inwardness of beings as remote as possible from ourselves—in short, to bring language and real life as close together as possible. Admittedly the earlier Romanticism (I mean that of Hugo and Musset) had no very profound grasp of this reality. And since Shakespeare could hardly have been less concerned with the picturesque, it is likely that one of the reasons why 19th-century translators were frustrated, is just that they had lost touch with what is the real source of Shakespeare's truth—that vital force of human creation, that passionate depth of feeling, which his verse directly expresses. But even in the most recent efforts, that sense of the glass between, of which I have spoken, is painfully persistent: to the extent that, in André Gide's translations (alas, very poor) we are left with the effect of a puppet-theatre—literary, artificial, and affected. Surely we cannot attribute this defect to some mere accident of literary history. Surely it is one of the great misfortunes of the French language when it tries to translate poems without being able to escape the concealed principles of its own very special and peculiar poetry.

What I wish to do here is to contrast Shakespeare's poetry with this hidden assumption about the nature of poetry. For I am convinced, in short, that quite apart from all the particular illustrations (I should like to have quoted more but nothing would really be adequate or clinching), the essence of this failure in translating Shakespeare lies in the opposing metaphysics which govern and sometimes tyrannize over the French and English language respectively.

If I had to sum up in a sentence the impression which Shakespeare makes upon me, I should say that, in his work, I see no opposition between the universal and the particular. In spite of scholastic tradition, he does not envisage these two poles of thought as contradictory because he does not admit them as his intellectual focus.

Is Macbeth an archetype like Antigone, or even Harpagon, or is he rather an individual caught in a unique destiny, the product of pure chance? Is Othello the type of the jealous man —or the incoherent victim of blind and senseless forces which could not be further from anything "clear and distinct?" These questions cannot be answered because they are wrongly stated. For Shakespeare deals with man's *actions*, which are never "particulars," because they participate in the universal categories of the consciousness which conceives them, but which also never—not even in the case of Brutus and Julius Cæsar —reach the fullness and clarity of the universal, because they have to compromise with the brute contingent.

Human action cannot be fitted into the framework of logic because Man is anxious to act only in order to negate his own particular nature by assigning to it universal aims. That Shakespeare's work is thus inherently two-valued results from his empirical observation of Man as he actually exists, without literary and philosophical prejudice. The actual subject in his tragedy is only a trap to catch a possibility of human existence so that it can be examined. The seemingly abstract setting of the action does not so much exclude, as concentrate, the real world, like a framework within which all the variations of action which human passion might conceive, could be instantaneously evoked. And Shakespeare's language, too, is a means rather than an end; it is always subordinate to the external object, which is something English allows. Nouns fade before the real presence of things, which stand starkly before us in the actual process of becoming. The uninflected adjectives snap qualities photographically, without raising the metaphysical problem of the relation of quality and substance, as the agreement of adjectives and nouns must do in French. English concerns itself naturally with tangible aspects. It accepts the reality of percepts and does not admit the possibility of any other kind, of another order of reality; it has a natural affinity with the Aristotelean critique of platonic ideas. And if its Latin roots, to some

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extent, unsettle this philosophical choice and allow a more abstract handling of experience to an intelligence brought up in this "devotion to the realm of things," they do not undermine the natural realism of the language so much as simply make it easier for us to bring down to earth our more ideal moments of being. To quote again that moment of the purest poetry, those most sublime words of Cleopatra—"I feel immortal longings": on the one hand the English is capable of seizing hold of the living actuality at its most concrete, immediate, and instinctive while, on the other, by using a word like *immortal*, which is pure Idea, it retains the capacity to reveal in this same concrete action the eternal and the universal. At a deeper level, the English language tells us that Immortality, this pure Idea, in some sense really exists and that it is a noble and veridical part of speech, but also that its activity and life depend on our will to create them. English poetry, Shakespeare's at least, rejects archetypal realism, but only in order to follow the inalienable liberty of man with greater flexibility.

And the greatness and richness of English poetry come from service to this liberty, as if offering it at every moment the entire range of its possibilities, so that any given word can open up a world, a "brave new world" to our perception. With French poetry it is a very different matter. Generally, with this more cautious, more self-contained kind of poetry, it is a fact that the words seem to state what they denote only to exclude immediately, from the poem's field of reference, whatever else is not denoted. The poet's statements do not set out to describe external reality but are a way of shutting himself in with certain selected percepts in a simplified, more circumscribed world. For instance, in his plays, Racine rejects all but a few situations and feelings. By stripping them of all the contingent or accidental details of real life, he seems to raise them to the dignity of the Platonic Idea, as if he wished to reduce his dramatic structure to the bare relations of congruence or opposition which hold between these Ideas. A more coherent world of intelligible essences is substituted for the real world. And, for all that, it is not an abstract world, for the Platonic Idea is profoundly double-natured, in the sense of taking on the life of sensible appearance in its most intense and specific form. But this world is, despite everything, *a place apart* where the bewildering diversity of the real can be forgotten, and also the very existence of time, everyday life and death. Poetic creation, in short, is hieratic, it makes an inviolable place, and while the rite of reading continues it draws the mind into this illusory communion.

Not all French poetry, of course, can be identified with the art of Racine. And in one case, that of Baudelaire, it went counter to Racine's design for poetry: but even then without moving out of this magic circle by which words circumscribe the mind. In re-discovering and re-affirming for himself the notion of poetry which was already implicit in the work of Villon and Maynard, Baudelaire was asserting against Racine the very existence of sensible things, the particular reality as such, the stubborn entities which people our mortal horizon, as if giving himself up completely to the phenomenal world and abandoning the hieratic use of language. Baudelaire is the most consistent and determined opponent of the Racinian theory. And yet this *principle of exclusion* which I have referred to, still governs his poetry. Even though he is dealing with *this* particular wind or *that* particular stone, rather than with wind or stone as such, with the idea, that is, of wind or stone, it is not, for all that, what these particular entities are like which matters to him. What matters is simply this mystery—that the Idea should stray into the very marrow of the sensible world, that it could have submitted to undergo limitation and death and that, while retaining its absolute status, it should have entered into this world of shadows and chance. Baudelaire is not trying, at any level of penetration, to describe things as they are, he is trying to convey the nature of existence, with whatever implications of feeling and moral insight can be based upon it. An intense and narrow aim, which restored to poetry that almost obsessional detachment from the phenomenal world which seems to be the fate of our main body of work.* It is as if words, in French, excluding instead of describing, brought into the poem the possibility (for the poet) of entering upon the threshold of a divine world, a possibility which shakes off the disintegrating diversity of sense: as if they made it a world of its own, a closed sphere.†

I should like to conclude by saying that in English the word is extrovert: it is all surface—and in French it is introvert, it is all depth. On the one hand a kind of word which can call

* If Baudelaire, for instance, calls up the image of a woman with black hair or green eyes, these are not so much personal characteristics as a definition of his own kind of sensibility.

† And that is why English poetry "means" so much more than French poetry. The former, whose words have no pretension to be Idea, will be able to put the world into words, to interpret and formulate it. The latter can only reveal the Idea, manifest beyond words and concepts. From this opposition the profound divergences of Anglo-Saxon and French literary criticism can also be deduced.

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upon all the rest to aid precision and enrichment; and on the other, a vocabulary as reduced as possible, so as to protect a single essential experience. On the one hand, unlimited dissociation, receptiveness to every dialectical or technical possibility, so that an alert awareness can penetrate always further into the phenomenal world. And on the other hand, all these evocations of sense entering into poetry as one enters into an Order, to be completely transformed. dying to the world, becoming one with the Idea which the poem continually realises. English poetry is like a mirror, French poetry like a crystal sphere. The French poet who is least like Racine and most like Shakespeare—so at least it is often said—is Paul Claudel. Now in *L'Annonce faite à Marie*, not only Violaine but Mara, not only Pierre de Craon but Jacques Hury speak with the same deliberate and highly-stylised speech, a uniformity which symbolises the unity of creation in the bosom of God, the non-existence of evil at the heart of God's world. In spite of its richness, there is no poetry which is more organic, more closely-knit than Paul Claudel's: still a sphere even if, with a mediæval pre-Copernican sense of the cosmos, Claudel thought he could succeed in making it into a correlative of the Sphere of Created Beings.

ENGLISH poetry, as I said, can be represented by a mirror, French by a sphere. How can these contradictory forms of poetry be translated into each other?

It may be easier now to see why so many French translations of Shakespeare are mediocre: they are nothing more than a compromise between these two linguistic structures. The French poetic vocabulary irresistibly tones down and dims the particular reality, that stubborn compound of the essential and the contingent. How then could we expect it to preserve Falstaff, who is particularity itself, emancipated from all forms and laws, even moral law? It is easier, too, to see how the majority of these translations came about historically. For Romanticism thought that it could be free of this inner law of the French language which I have tried to isolate. But the Romantics, who wished to revolutionise the old dictionary and multiply its references to the real world, while still producing poetry, never achieved more than a shallow exploitation of this new territory. They were no more sensitive to the deeper stirrings of instinct and passion than they were to this dialectic of essence and existence on which Racine and Baudelaire had both pondered.

How, then, is Shakespeare to be translated? If I wished to end on a pessimistic note, I could easily make a list of all the forms which this fundamental opposition might assume, or, in other words, all the points of fidelity a translation should realise which French structure makes difficult, if not impossible. Thus the alternation of prose and verse in Shakespearean tragedy is true to reality, it witnesses to the opposing forces—the heroic and the commonplace—which are at work in the world: at the end of the cobbler's scene in *Julius Cæsar*, the abrupt return to verse is a dramatic assertion of the will to nobility in a boorish world. But this plurality of perspectives is not possible in French poetry. Not only with Corneille and Racine but also with Hugo and Claudel the "crowd" speak in verse and, like the Chorus in Greek Tragedy, the less they share in the nobler parts of the action, the more strictly they are bound to formal poetic expression.

That word-play has to be translated is another difficulty. Shakespeare's punning is genuinely "two-valued," reflecting the complex nature of the real world, but French does not take kindly to the pun and it is unlikely to be anything better than a nihilistic (sometimes a directly subversive) assault on rational mind. Indeed the least significant word in a poem has latent within it the entire structure of its language. Mere literal translation of the word is not enough to break down the structure. Take that one word *"Sortez,"* Roxane's cry in *Bajazet*. How much of its implication would we expect to survive, translated into English or many other languages? There is a great danger that this tremendous word by which she severs herself from the world of sense, this word which implies a whole metaphysics, would turn out a mere theatrical effect.

But is there much point in making a long list of difficulties? It would be of more use to take note of the one remaining possibility which may, one day, give us the chance of solving the problem of Shakespearean translation—at least, of raising it to a new level.

IF, AS I have tried to show, every language has an individual structure and the linguistic structure of French poetry is "Platonic" while that of Shakespeare's English is a sort of passionate Aristotelianism, then every true translation—and this quite apart from accuracy of detail—has a kind of moral obligation to be a metaphysical reflection, the contemplation of one way of thinking by another, the attempt to express from one's own angle the specific nature of that thought, and finally a kind of examination of one's own resources. From that point translation penetrates far beyond the rendering of explicit discourse and of the significances which can be directly grasped, into the indirect ways of expression (prosodic usage or the handling of imagery, for instance). Translation

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becomes a language's struggle with its own nature, at the very core of its being, the quickening-point of its growth.

Now, I believe that French poetry to-day is much better prepared than it has ever been to wage this struggle with its own language. In general terms, we may have reached that point in Western history when the major languages have to emerge from their naïvety and break with their instinctive assumptions, so as to establish themselves in a different kind of truth, with all its contradictions and difficulties. And without attempting to deny the existence of its present structure, recent French poetry is undergoing a revolution which by disturbing this metaphysical tendency, and attacking it, could make it at some time or other more possible to convey Shakespeare's artistic intention.

What is the real point at issue? I have contended that a French word, in its "classic" usage, designates what it refers to only in order to exclude the real world of heterogeneous existences. I have contended, too, that Baudelaire affirmed this reality of existences but that it was not so much these real entities, as our relations with them, which he took as the focus of poetic contemplation; and so once again he made a closed world out of language, the world of a being cut off from the objects which it desires, and doomed to render, only obliquely, this reality which can never enter into its words.

This kind of poetry is still a subjective account of the soul, it is a *psychology*; but there is another, more recent poetry which aims at *salvation*. It conceives of the Thing, the real object, in its separation from ourselves, its infinite otherness, as something which can give us an instantaneous glimpse of essential being, and thus be our salvation, if indeed we are able to tear the veil of universals, of the conceptual, to attain to it.

Whether this ambition is well-grounded or not is of little importance. The essential which we must bear in mind is the demand which it makes on language—to be prepared to digest this most remote kind of object: the being of things, their metaphysical *thereness*, their presence before us, most remote from verbalisation, and receive them in their pure existence, their stubborn atomicity, and their opaque silence. While it continues to exclude the complexity of phenomena, this poetry is an attempt to lose its identity, to go beyond its own nature, to the point where the universal *becomes* the particular (the ontologically unique), an ecstatic plunge into the existential. This pursuit of otherness, of absolute exteriority, is surely not so far from Shakespeare. Is it not an attempt to contemplate, in the dimension of universality, what Shakespeare lays bare in particular beings as their source and background? When, for instance, he traces through Macbeth's whole line of fate the ineluctable presence of the witches, or shows Hamlet's mind haunted by the indissoluble Ghost, or reveals, in *The Winter's Tale*, the hope—absurd but still triumphant—of a real resurrection in the flesh. Always a rational universe is given the lie; it melts away before the void, and human action projects itself into an obscure and incommunicable region. There is no great difference between the Hamlet who realises that the reign of law has passed away (and that justification is to be found, if anywhere, in a subjective choice without ground or warrant) and our contemporary French poetry which has abdicated from its age-old kingdom to take, like the Prince of Denmark, its chance with *Angst*, impotence, and silence.

To put it another way, it is at the level of their deepest intuitions that the realism of Shakespeare and recent French poetry's denial of idealism may henceforth communicate. And what can be said directly by Shakespeare may, perhaps, be indirectly suggested in a language which, apart from honouring the explicit content of each work to be translated, can now contribute a profound feeling for the very being and presence of things, which will deeply exercise its own poetic resources. Thus the necessary surpassing of classical forms, of closed types of prosody (being at one and the same time the keeping and the breaking of the rules) is identified with the necessity, in translations of Shakespeare, of preserving the poetic line in its most basic rhythms without, for all that, allowing the survival of a belief in a hieratic and unreal world. In fact, Shakespeare and many Elizabethans have become immensely instructive for French poetry in the process of finding itself. We ought to give this our very special attention. If we still fail to translate Shakespeare we shall certainly have less excuse than translators who have gone before.

The confrontation of two languages in a translation is a metaphysical and moral experiment, the "control" of one way of thinking by another. Sometimes it is sheer impossibility, indeed vanity. But from time to time, something may emerge whose consequences add another level of interest to the mere fact of translation, by raising a language to a new level of awareness through the circuitous ways of poetry.

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TELEVISION

Tempo Fugit . . .

By Kenneth Tynan

NEARLY a year ago ABC Television invited me to produce for them a series of fortnightly Sunday afternoon programmes on the arts, each to last for fifty minutes. I accepted; and the fifteenth and final issue went out a few Sundays ago. The experiment, for the moment, is over; and whether it was a disaster, a qualified success, a triumph or a qualified failure I have no trustworthy means of knowing. The critics gave the programme scattered and casual attention; the ratings fluctuated like an earthquake chart; and most of the other reactions I got can be summed up in the following conversation with a journalist friend. "Pity about your programme," he said. "I suppose it was just a sort of sop for the Pilkington Committee, but really you shouldn't have let them use your name like that." I asked him how many of the series he had seen. "Well, actually I only saw part of the second one," he said, "but you know what I mean." Actually, I didn't; and I still don't. The whole experience of editing *Tempo* (a title imposed from above, but not a bad one at that) has been odd, and a few reflections on it may not be out of place.

To begin with, there were flaws and perils inherent in the way the show was organised. I'm not talking about commercial pressures; predictably, I was encouraged to look for big names, but I managed without much difficulty to confine myself to the big names I admired. A worse problem was under-staffing. Apart from myself, the entire production team consisted of an assistant producer, a studio director, two research girls and two typists—a scanty nucleus for an enterprise so ambitious. In programmes of this kind filming on quite an elaborate scale is a necessity; yet we had no permanent film director. Whenever filming was required we had to employ a director and crew from the Pathé Picture Corporation, a sister company of ABC Television. Able and willing as these technicians often were, they had no experience in the field of what might be called cultural documentaries; outside the B.B.C., few people have.

Which brings me to another disadvantage, of which I was not at first aware. The B.B.C. has traditionally paid no attention to the rules laid down by the film unions regarding the size of camera crews; or, to put it another way round, the unions have traditionally allowed the B.B.C. to flout them, presumably because the Corporation is not a capitalist enterprise. The results, in a programme like mine, were often crippling. If, for example, I wanted to film a ten-minute interview with a writer, I would have to take a crew of eleven people; in similar circumstances the B.B.C. could send two men and a boy. Except on rare occasions and by a good deal of budget-stretching, this meant that I could not let a film director live with his subject and devote to it the time and care that are taken as a matter of course on a programme like *Monitor*. The B.B.C. has a large film department with a tradition of continuity behind it: we were called on not only to create a tradition where none existed, but also to do so at prohibitive expense. Another drawback was the Equity strike, which began soon after *Tempo* started and continued until the series was nearly over; it was a good strike, and I thoroughly approved of it, but it effectively prevented me from dealing with the art of which I know most—the theatre. There was also a time-slot problem. Our original starting-time was 5.15; but this broke into the so-called "Toddlers' Truce"; the sixty minutes between five and six are reserved for programmes that children can suitably view. This was a hampering condition, and before long our kick-off was pushed back to 2.45 p.m., at which time the toddlers were presumed not to be viewing; but the modicum of added freedom that we gained from the switch was distressingly overweighed by the fact that at a quarter to three most of our putative audience were either lunching or post-prandially

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snoozing. Finally, we never succeeded in finding anyone to introduce the programme with the experience and authority of a Huw Wheldon or a Cliff Michelmore. Perhaps because of this, it was said that *Tempo* lacked personality. You would be surprised how many critics tend to judge a show on the personality of the introducer, rather than on the quality of the things introduced.

CONSIDERING that ours was the first magazine of the arts ever attempted by British commercial television, I don't think we did at all badly. As I look back on the items we presented, about a third of them seem to me to have been misfires, another third pretty respectable efforts, and the remaining third adventurous and often outstanding. In the first category I would place many of our teething pains —a truncated debate on politics and art that included (among others) Lindsay Anderson and Auberon Waugh; an impersonation by Peter Sellers of the Victorian joke-poet McGonigall; an abortive though well-meaning attempt to discover how standards of art appreciation are formed by questioning a group of 'teen-agers about their reactions to pieces of sculpture. From this black list I except the cast of *Beyond the Fringe*, who performed on our early (pre-strike) programmes, to my delight though not, apparently, to that of many other people. On the pretty respectable list I would count Kingsley Amis' illustrated lecture on pop culture, a highly personal history of cartoon film by Dick Williams (the best cartoon director in Britain), the interviews with William Gerhardi and Truman Capote, a lively conversational trio composed of Michael Flanders, Jonathan Miller and Mort Sahl, and the British debut of Maria Albaïcin, the most compelling flamenco dancer Spain has produced for many years. On the upper level, I think of the film we made to commemorate Gordon Craig's ninetieth birthday, for which the old lion put on a wonderful display of idiosyncrasy; the programme in which we talked to Françoise Sagan, Natalie Sarraute, Marcel Marceau and others about the artist's responsibility in a time of political crisis; the first performance in England of the Isaac Stern Trio; Jill Craigie's devastating filmed critique of contemporary British architecture; a pictorial essay on the face of Christ in art, written in spare, muscular prose by John Whiting and movingly spoken by Cecil Day Lewis; and Peter Newington's film of Graham Sutherland at work, in the course of which Sutherland became the first artist of international repute to allow the whole process of painting a picture to be filmed for television. And many other bits and pieces impose themselves on my memory—John Osborne, curtly demolishing the British film industry in a programme about the New Wave; John Huston unwittingly revealing that his own relationship with his father had something to do with his obsessive ambition to make a film about Freud; and the schizophrenic Irish girl who talked about her paintings in John McGrath's haunting film about psychotic art.

WHAT PUZZLED ME at first was not only the wary, suspicious tone that marked our earlier reviews, but the amazingly diversified kinds of disapproval with which we were greeted. Doris Lessing called us "bland and chi-chi"; but no sooner had we mounted a full-scale assault on an established institution (the British cinema) than we were upbraided for being self-consciously aggressive. One critic complained that *Tempo* was too esoteric and riddled with private allusions; in the same week another declared that the show talked down to its audience and was obsessed with commercial gimmicks. The *Sunday Telegraph* decided that the superiority of *Monitor* lay in the fact that *Tempo* merely talked about art, whereas *Monitor showed* it. A fortnight later we presented, in our Graham Sutherland programme, as intimate a study of artistic work in progress as television has ever attempted. The *Sunday Telegraph* did not review it; nor, for that matter, did anyone else.

The Isaac Stern Trio and Whiting's script about Christ went similarly unnoticed. And our survey of the French crisis, which was screened only after strenuous arguments with the I.T.A. and eleventh-hour cuts under pressure from the French Embassy, received a couple of sentences in *The Observer*, and that was that. During this period, of course, the usual stream of articles was appearing in the monthlies and weeklies deploring the debased cultural standards of commercial television. One of them made a glancing reference to *Tempo*, observing that the difference between my series and John Berger's *Drawn from Life* on Granada was that the latter at least had serious intentions. The same critic, incidentally, soon afterwards devoted a whole column of the *New Statesman* to lacerating our symposium on "The Irish in the Arts." This Irish effort ("the best *Tempo* yet," according to *The Spectator*) was the first of five weekly programmes, each concerned with one general subject. With this quintet our series ended. The *New Statesman* critic wrote nothing about the other four.

THE IDEA OF dedicating a whole edition to a general artistic topic (*e.g.* modern architecture, experimental cinema, the relationship of artists

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to war, and the influence of Oxbridge on the arts) was something pioneered by *Tempo* and brilliantly copied by *Monitor* in lecture-programmes like the one on modern music and the twelve-tone scale. I tried, at the outset, to seduce some of *Monitor*'s film directors with promises of greater freedom. Had I not commissioned from Willis Hall and Keith Waterhouse a script entitled *"Saturday Night and Samstag Abend,"* which ironically examined the cultural discrepancy between Leeds (their birthplace) and Wupperthal, a German city less populous than Leeds but much better supplied with theatre, ballet, music and opera? I had indeed; but the script was too expensive for us to film. The *Monitor* men sensibly rejected my overtures. The B.B.C. could offer them continuous employment and long-term security; whereas I could offer them nothing more than a six-month contract. You can buy skill that way, but not talent. The B.B.C. can afford to watch the hour hand; I.T.V. thinks in terms of minutes.

OBVIOUSLY, when a critic like myself sets up as a producer, he must expect to be judged by the strictest standards, and should not be surprised to hear, in some quarters, a distant sharpening of knives. Much that was wrong with *Tempo* was rightly attacked; but much that was right was wrongly ignored. I learned to marvel at the way in which a minute technical error, a detail of setting or a minor fault of presentation could take precedence in a review over the meat that was being presented. The setting of hothouse plants in which we interviewed Truman Capote was mentioned by almost everyone, and held to be "tasteless." Nobody, however, discussed what Mr. Capote actually said. In lodging these complaints, I am not suggesting that the critics should have taken into account the special problems of producing a minority programme for a commercial company. One entire issue—a fifty-minute study of eroticism in the arts—was banned by the I.T.A. for Sunday viewing; and this irked me considerably, the more so when my proposed alternative, "Freud and the Arts," was rejected out of hand by ABC Television. But for the programmes that were shown I take full responsibility, and would not wish to pass any bucks.

All the same, something rankles; and the root of it, I believe, is connected with the fact that TV critics, by the very nature of their profession, cannot be other than amateurs. By this I don't mean that they should have more professional knowledge of the medium; most producers would agree with me that there is nothing more tiresome than the critic who spices his reviews with half-digested scraps of technical know-how. What I am implying is that no man has a range of experience and interests wide enough to qualify him as a judge of television's enormously varied output. That legendary creature, the Renaissance man, might fit the bill; but even he might pull in his horns when confronted with the exiguous space that most newspapers allot to television. (I won't dwell on the appalling irresponsibility of the Beaverbrook papers, which never review television at all, even when—as happened once with *Tempo*—it provides them with a front-page story.) No editor in his right mind would employ the same man to write about drama, film, music, ballet, books, opera, education, religion, politics and current affairs; yet a TV critic is expected to tackle all these and more. He naturally concentrates on the subjects he knows about; but self-respect insists that he should be equally dogmatic on the subjects about which he is ignorant. This is an impossible situation, not only for him but for the people who make television.

TV IS NOT an art form in its own right. It is a means—technically far from perfect—of transmitting images; and apart from outside broadcasts and on-the-spot news coverage it can do nothing that cannot be better done on film. The best TV shows—the ones most often described as "uniquely televisual"—are usually between thirty and sixty minutes in length; and most of them could equally well be shown in cinemas if the economics of film programming did not prohibit it. Artistically, there is nothing unique about television except that its audience is split up into units of two or three; and this is scarcely enough to form the basis of a new aesthetic. Television is an outlet for all the arts; it is not an art in itself.

Ideally, each newspaper should engage a separate critic for TV drama, TV music, TV books, and the rest. If that is too much to hope for, they should ask their existing specialists in these subjects to extend their surveillance to television. In any case, some kind of specialisation is urgently needed—at least a division of labour, so that the man who gives his opinion of a documentary about insect life is not called on, in the next breath, to review a performance of Menuhin with the London Philharmonic. At present the judgment seat is occupied by sciolists, to whom all programmes must appeal, no matter how diverse the audiences for whom they are intended. In the absence of direct sponsorship (which is baneful but clear-cut), and lacking a tradition of public service (which

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motivates the B.B.C., even at its worst), commercial television in this country has no criteria of self-appraisal except those supplied by the critics, who are consequently more influential here than in America, where the simple criterion of ratings is final and absolute. One sends each show out into limbo. If every newspaper had two or three TV critics, the situation would be much improved. Moreover, three critics would inevitably demand more space than one; and that would be better still. If *Tempo* had been exposed to steady and informed critical attention, *in extenso*, programme by programme, it might conceivably have been mowed down. That is one possibility. Another is that it might have found its feet more quickly than it did.

Would I go through the *Tempo* experience again? Unquestionably—other things being less unequal.

A Few Days Ago

That dark adventure was a tree,
A beldame spruce, inside whose trunk
The sap flowed secretly

Threaded to what had gone before;
Each mood or prospect had kinship
Through that slim corridor

From tap-root to leaf filament.
I found myself enclosed within
The experience. It lent

Its temper to those days, until
It was all over.—Relieved,
I moved again at will

Without that darkness ruling me,
Nor swept along in the winey sap
Of that wind-shaken tree.

What will follow? Things come upon
Us unexpectedly. I wonder
What image or condition

Will bind my next fortnight together:
The stately rising of an elm
Or sodden golden straw?

Barbara Howes

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NOTES & TOPICS

Borges

JORGE LUIS BORGES is a writer of very small output. Two slight volumes contain almost all those stories on which his growing reputation rests; and none of these covers more than fifteen pages. Yet such is the concentration of his style that in this little space he will present a whole world with all the metaphysical consequences of its existence, or call up an absolutely unfamiliar landscape—of an imaginary country or a real one—down to its last accurately defined and unforgettable detail. In *"The Babylonian Lottery"** he invents a civilization which is in every way as real as any of those presented to us by archaeologists and pre-historians. Indeed the growing complication and sclerosis of its customs is truer than any historical reality. Borges can, moreover, invest the present with the same legendary actuality as the past. The English Midlands at the time of the Battle of the Somme provides the setting for his metaphysical spy-story, *"The Garden of Forking Paths"*; and in *"Emma Zunz"* and *"Death and the Compass Needle"* we are introduced to the streets and the suburban mansions of his native Buenos Aires.

Common to all the settings of Borges' stories is the theme of the labyrinth, whether as a garden of endlessly forking paths, or a house of innumerable rooms, or a library of infinite shelves and galleries. To his sceptically intellectual imagination the Universe is a maze constructed by the supreme Maze-Builder, the problem of whose existence or non-existence provides its ultimate question. Making man in his own image, this real or fictitious god endowed him too with the power of labyrinthine construction. Man is only real for Borges in so far as he is, like the story-teller himself, a creator of myths.

Borges has read omnivorously and idiosyncratically in many languages, though predominantly in English. Indeed he claims to have read more English than Spanish. Gnostics, idealistic philosophers—Schopenhauer and Hume in particular—and more recent scientific and metaphysical speculators, like Hilton and Ouspensky, have given him the ideas for his stories, which he constructs with the precision and intellectual mastery of Robert Louis Stevenson and G. K. Chesterton, who are two of his favourite authors. His genre is the concentrated metaphysical thriller. Sometimes he uses the deductive method of the early detective story; sometimes the tale of pure adventure provides him with a model. His range of interest extends from the most legendary past, in *"The Circular Ruins,"* to life on a Uruguayan cattle-ranch in the last century. Always, however, his stories are imbued with the same sense of mystery; always they are constructed with the same knife-edged logic; and his characters, whether they exist in Babylon or Buenos Aires, seem always to be driven by the same unfathomable and violent urges. They are the puppets of a power whose ends are unknown—perhaps he has none—but whose processes provide the excuse for endless card-castles of reasoning.

Born in 1899, Jorge Luis Borges passed some early years in Switzerland and Spain. Returning home in 1921, he contributed to various avant-garde journals of Buenos Aires a number of poems in the "ultraist manner". Though a co-founder of "Ultraism"—a movement given to striking metaphor—Borges rapidly abandoned it; he was more interested in mental legerdemain. His early poems, which he has long ceased to value, were concerned with the mysteries of time and personality, also with the problem of perception. But they were not exercises in pure abstraction, like the contemporary *"Muerte sin fin"* of the Mexican José Gorostiza. As the title of his best volume *"Fervor de Buenos Aires"* suggests, they were urban, even local in their evocations. Buenos Aires represented for Borges the last and most haunting example of the great labyrinth. Its older and shabbier east side has always greatly appealed to him.

Until the Perón dictatorship Borges worked as librarian in the National Library. He is, however, an "oligarch," proud of his Portuguese descent and his land-owning connections. An intellectual aristocrat also, he was disliked by the Peronists, who took away his job. For some time he earned his living by teaching English in the British Institute—his English is faultless—and in 1953 he was moving from address to address in fear of arrest. Many of his friends, the group which supported the Europeanising magazine *Sur*, were then in jail. By this time the majority of his stories were written, and some had appeared during the forties, first in *Sur* and then in book-form. Throughout these years his sight was progressively worsening. Yet he continued to read. He was, however, increasingly compelled to resort to dictation; and sometimes to work in collaboration. At present he is virtually blind. With the restoration of democracy Borges was reappointed to the National Library, and he now plays a commanding part in Argentinian intellectual life.

For Borges is, before all else, an Argentinian; which is most evident in his preference for

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almost any other European literature to that of the parent-country Spain. He notes somewhere that the *Koran*, the Arabs' book of books, contains no reference to the camel. "We Argentinians," he proceeds, "can compare ourselves to Mahomet; we can believe in the possibility of being Argentinians without wallowing in local colour." Borges has certainly paid tribute to the local background, in his stories, in which the great city even when unnamed, is recognisably Buenos Aires, and in his most acute brief essay on "Aspects of Gaucho Literature." Here he sums up the achievement of these 19th-century primitives and concludes with a poem of his own in their honour. For, in his own words, "the best criticism of a story is another story by another man on the same theme."

In fact both the capital and life on the pampas appear frequently in his work, but not in the form of local colour. The Argentinian quality of Borges is most evident in the impersonality of his narration. Many characters appear, most of them imaginary but a few living persons as well. Yet the overwhelming impression is of the unimportance of man in a Universe governed by blind and unknowable laws. The vast skies above the empty pampas, or above Buenos Aires itself and the muddy expanse of the Rio de la Plata, convey this same impression of personal non-existence; which is admirably expressed also by Borges' chief contemporary among the poets, Ricardo Molinari. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of Argentinianism—as seen in the neighbourhood of Buenos Aires—is the absence of "camels"—of trees, hills, villages, church-towers —of anything indeed higher or more arresting than the chimney of the city's electricity works. In reflecting this emptiness Borges is supremely Argentinian.

Borges' stories were translated into French in 1951 and 1953, and Paris immediately acknowledged him as an important writer. A German translation followed, but only with last year's winning of the Fomentor award did he receive any notice from the English-speaking world. Now his stories are about to be printed simultaneously in London and New York.

J. M. Cohen

The Djilas Affair

WHEN the former Yugoslav member of the Politburo, Milovan Djilas, was sentenced to several years' imprisonment in 1957 for the publication of his book *The New Class* one could not approve the sentence but it was quite possible to understand it from the Communist point of view. Communist régimes simply do not recognise the principle of freedom of thought and cannot tolerate any fundamental criticism of their institutions. *The New Class* was a fundamental criticism and therefore bound inevitably to anger the Belgrade government as much as it would have done any other Communist régime.

Djilas has now been arrested again and remanded in custody, this time on account of the imminent publication of a book which does not contain any attack on the Yugoslav régime or any criticism of Communism. This new book of reminiscences, *Conversations with Stalin*, deals with a man who died nine years ago and only describes events which took place at least fourteen years ago. What Djilas has written is not in any sense a hymn in praise of Stalin calculated to annoy the intensely anti-Stalinist Yugoslav leaders. His description of the great tyrant is entirely negative though he is fair-minded enough not to deny his historical greatness.

A man has been arrested because he intends to publish a book critical of Stalin, not in China nor Albania, but in anti-Stalinist Yugoslavia. This makes it seem not only a brutal but also an unconsidered and plainly ridiculous action. It obviously arises from the fact that, for the Communists, world politics is a great conspiracy. They regard the publication of reports of meetings of Communist Party leaders as the betrayal of conspirators' secrets, even though the meetings took place fifteen years ago and the world political situation and the position of their own country have meanwhile completely changed. The arrest of Milovan Djilas proves that even today the Yugoslav Communist leaders still adhere to this attitude in spite of the fact that they have long since been excluded from the great conspiracy.

The Yugoslavs' desperate attempts to stop the publication of *Conversations with Stalin* inevitably suggest that they have a bad conscience. Their attitude is bound to give the world the impression that the book contains secrets damaging to the prestige of the Tito régime. In fact, however, the manuscript contains no such secrets whatsoever. For a long time now the Western chancelleries have been in no doubt as to the kind of radically anti-Western policy the Yugoslavs were pursuing right up to the time of their exclusion from the Cominform. That Yugoslavia and Bulgaria in 1948 wanted to intervene together on the side of the partisans in the Greek civil war and that Stalin stopped them because he did not want to risk a world war was already known from the official biography of Tito by Vladimir Dedijer which appeared in 1953 with the consent of the Yugoslav Central Committee and of which hundreds

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of thousands of copies have been sold in the non-Communist world. This knowledge did not prevent the Greek king and queen from accepting President Tito's hospitality in Belgrade and on Brioni, nor did it stop the Americans from giving Yugoslavia generous economic aid and, in the years of trouble, military help as well.

To-day Yugoslavia only has enemies inside the Eastern bloc and not even the fiercest of her enemies, the Albanian Enver Hodscha, will be able to use Djilas's new book as a weapon against the Yugoslavs. The disclosure which the book contains that he, Hodscha, requested the Belgrade government to send troops to his country only a few months before Yugoslavia was excluded from the Cominform, can only be embarrassing to himself.

There are no rational grounds for the arrest of Milovan Djilas. But the Yugoslav leaders' attitude towards Djilas is not dictated by reason but by emotion, and emotion is notoriously the worst adviser in politics. For them Djilas is an old comrade in arms who suddenly abandoned them and declared war on their cause. For them that was treason. Hence their harshness towards him.

Yugoslav courts have already sentenced Djilas to more than nine years' imprisonment. He served four-and-a-half years partly in solitary confinement, partly in the company of criminals, until the government was induced to release him in response to the pleas of Eleanor Roosevelt, the British Labour Party leaders, and other personalities. But the amnesty which had been promised him did not follow. The pension due to him as a former member of the government has not been paid. Djilas has failed to find a publisher for his non-political books in his own country, in spite of the fact that his reminiscences of his youth in his native Montenegro are probably the most valuable work to be produced in the literature of that country, which does not abound in masterpieces, since the days of the national poet, prince-bishop Peter Petrovitch Njegosh.

Djilas's biography of Njegosh, to which he devoted many years, cannot be published in Yugoslavia. Even the issue of Ignazio Silone's magazine in which his moving short story *War* has appeared has been banned in Yugoslavia. (It has recently been published in English in ENCOUNTER.)

The wrath aroused in them by the renegade has evidently completely blinded the Yugoslav leaders to the fact that the rest of the world considers it not treason but courage of a high order when a man openly expresses deviating opinions at the risk of imprisonment and death. They simply do not realise how greatly the international standing of their régime is being damaged by the persecution of this courageous man; and all this in spite of the fact that the political influence of their country depends in large measure on how their régime is evaluated by the outside world.

Ernst Halperin

History and Theory

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY has never been a popular subject in Great Britain, whether with philosophers or with historians, and it shows few signs of genuinely gaining in prestige at the present time. Its problems have, indeed, been treated to good effect by a number of individual British philosophers in the last ten years: witness the work of Isaiah Berlin and Patrick Gardiner in Oxford, Karl Popper and J. W. N. Watkins in London, P. H. Nowell-Smith in Leicester, and W. B. Gallie in Belfast. It remains true nonetheless that many professional teachers of philosophy scarcely recognise its existence, and that no British university, except the newly-founded University of Sussex, prescribes it as a regular part of a philosophy course. Nor is its repute among historians any greater; rather the reverse. Here again there are individuals who take an interest in questions about history which are philosophical or semi-philosophical: E. H. Carr and Herbert Butterfield in Cambridge, Geoffrey Barraclough and Alfred Cobban in London, Alan Bullock in Oxford are among the best known. To the great majority of British working historians, however, philosophy of history is an object of suspicion, if not of contempt. The relative prestige which the subject enjoys in America, reflected for instance in the recurrent concern of American historians with what are called "methodological" problems, has no parallel in this country. The reasons why this state of affairs obtains and persists deserve investigation. They seem to me to be connected with certain striking, and perhaps not wholly admirable, features of British intellectual life.

FUNDAMENTALLY, I SUGGEST, the explanation why there is little or no current interest in philosophy of history in Great Britain lies in the character of history as professionally practised here. A subject develops a philosophy only when it is a matter of more or less acute controversy: history in Great Britain, so far from being contro-

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versial, is, like so much else in this country, an established institution. It can be worked at, and commonly is, in a way which is quite unreflective.

I do not mean by this to imply anything so absurd as that historians can do their job without thinking what they are doing, nor that recent British historians have been content to follow uncritically in the footsteps of their fathers: the work of a Namier alone would be enough to refute any such notion. But I think it is true that there are many competent historians in the country whose general attitude to their subject is quite unspeculative; who think of themselves as engaged in a great co-operative activity, the discovery of truth about the past, to which their own contribution can necessarily be only minute, but which they nevertheless feel confident that they can make thanks to their inheritance of well-tried and well-established ways of discovering and exploiting evidence. For such persons history is a going concern, an activity whose credentials are now so sound that they could not be successfully challenged, an activity moreover whose practice brings a peculiar satisfaction of its own. To suggest to them that it might rest on questionable assumptions, or promise what it cannot perform, is to suggest something wholly idle.

THE IMPULSE of contemporary British historians not to think about their subject, engendered by the feeling that it is anyhow in order as it is, is strengthened by the operation of a number of other factors.

There is first of all the notion, not of course peculiar to the British but widely shared among professional historians generally, that their real concern is with the detail of past events, as opposed to their overall look. The public may demand general histories, but in an age of ever increasing specialisation fewer and fewer historians are attracted to writing them. Convinced that the real stuff of history is to be found in monographs and periodical literature, historians are naturally more sensitive to differences in detailed interpretation than to the clash of opposing points of view. The narrowness of the professional interests of many English historians has important effects in this connection. For many of them history means, primarily, the history of England and, secondarily, the history of western Europe: it embraces the rest of the world only so far as European civilisation impinged upon it. The most effective training in the Oxford History School is undoubtedly the history of medieval England, a subject which at once provides the beginner with intellectual puzzles of the right degree of difficulty and furnishes his teachers with problems whose solution seems not impossibly distant, in view of the way in which source material is steadily accumulating and yielding results. A man can emerge from this School with a first-class degree knowing little or nothing of the history of the United States, very little of the history of Russia and India, and nothing at all of the history of China. And though he will have some acquaintance with the history of ideas, in so far as he has had to prepare for a paper in "Political Science," his whole training, and the attitude of many of his teachers, will have made him suspicious of ideas in the abstract, and left him quite unequipped to deal with their analysis.

BUT THERE IS A FURTHER FACTOR of greater importance than any so far mentioned: the absence of really serious doctrinal differences among British historians.

It is not, of course, that controversy is quite unknown among them: it exists, even if its existence is not the most prominent feature of the British historical scene. But it tends, when it does flare up, to turn on technical points or to centre round personalities, rather than to reveal fundamental divergences of view about what is really important in history. All in all, British historians agree remarkably in their attitude to the past: they approach it as reasonable men, tolerant, liberal, humane in their outlook, unreflectively confident that the true historian is and can be wholly without preconceptions. There are, naturally, differences of emphasis within a broadly similar standpoint—the conservatism which piety towards the past instils in many historians is by no means universally shared—but they are differences of emphasis only.

Here, I think, we have to do with a feature of general intellectual life in Britain rather than with something peculiar to British historians.

It is just not the case that the British, or at least the English, take abstractions seriously. For them what matters, even in an intellectual context, is not ideas or principles, but working arrangements. Their genius is for dealing with particular situations and understanding specific cases; general principles, and still more whole philosophies, seem to them of minor importance, for no sensible man would allow his judgment to be guided by what theory dictates in the face of evident fact. This is the "empiricism" for which the British are famous, and which affects far more than their formal philosophy. Its acceptance explains, or goes some way to explain, many features of the British scene which are without parallel on the European Continent: the fact, for example, that intellectuals as a class are not marked off, in their own eyes or in those of others, from the rest of the community (men

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of ideas in such circumstances are themselves ready to acknowledge the limited utility of ideas); the constant pressure there is on a left-wing party in politics, or a moral or religious movement which advocates principles to which it claims there can be no exceptions, to abandon its "dogmas" in favour of practical compromise; the very slight effect which religious differences have on social and intellectual relationships. And its effect on the writing of history is certainly marked, for given such an intellectual (one might almost say, anti-intellectual) atmosphere, fundamental controversy, of the kind which prevails among, say, French historians, is simply not to be found. Where Marxists and non-Marxists, clericals and anti-clericals, dispute constantly on the proper construction to be put on a piece of evidence or a set of events, the issue of historical truth must remain alive, indeed present itself as in need of urgent reflection. But when the practice is to look on such disputes with a jaundiced eye, and to think that agreement can in any case be reached on the technical level, that issue can at most be academic. The fact that there are no true Marxist historians in Britain is at once a symptom of this state of affairs and a partial explanation of it. Those British historians who call themselves Marxists wear their Marxism with a difference: they are not prepared to dismiss their opponents as utterly wrong-headed, but recognise them as fellow-practitioners of a craft, with whom they share certain professional standards. You cannot deny all validity to the work of a man whom you allow to be playing the same game as yourself.

THERE IS YET ANOTHER REASON why British historians remain complacent about the essential correctness of their own ways of going on: it is to be found in the low prestige which sociological studies enjoy in the country, and more particularly in its formal educational establishments.

American students of history are acutely aware of at least one philosophical problem about history because they are constantly reminded that their conclusions are merely particular, whereas those of the "behavioral" sciences are universal: they have to show, to themselves and the outer world, that history is worth study despite this seeming defect. But their British counterpart is under no comparable necessity, since he has scarcely heard of the social sciences. Except in London, sociology has been added to the curriculum of British universities only very recently: the vast departments and imposing research projects so common in North America are virtually unknown. Economics, of course, flourishes, but it can clearly co-exist with history without difficulty; psychology is potentially a more serious rival, but wins little attention from historians because its professional practitioners so often appear to be concerned with the minds of rats rather than the minds of men. It is noteworthy too that social anthropology, one of the few branches of sociological study to which British writers have made major contributions, is pursued by them as a series of case studies, from which no general conclusions are drawn. Here again there is nothing to alarm the historian, but on the contrary everything to suggest that he is right.

It is true, of course, that British historians are not entirely free of criticism from social scientists: the charge of "antinomianism," unwillingness to move from the particular to the general, has been constantly brought against them by Toynbee. And it must be allowed that, so far as philosophy of history stirs a real, as opposed to a merely academic, interest in the country, it does so because of Toynbee's work. Unhappily the excesses of that work militate against its being taken seriously, particularly by historians, who are misled, as is the author himself, by his claim to be writing a form of history proper. But the vehemence with which British historians denounced Toynbee is perhaps sufficient proof that they were concerned with more than his technical errors: they divined correctly that he was challenging their whole position, even if the challenge was obscurely expressed and inadequately argued.

THE OBJECT of the preceding paragraphs has been to show, admittedly in a very sketchy way, why the theory of history has little or no appeal to contemporary British historians. To put the matter succinctly: no theoretical questions about history arise for these historians because to them history is already all it needs to be and can be. But however uncritical *historians* may be about the nature and presuppositions of their own enquiry, have we not reason to expect that *philosophers*, whose professional business it is to poke their fingers into other people's pies, will repair the deficiency for them? The sad truth is, however, that with the few exceptions mentioned at the beginning British philosophers take as little interest in theoretical questions about history as do their historical colleagues. I have already pointed out a major reason for this lack of interest in the uncontroversial state of history itself, though I think that philosophers, who should at least be aware of the possibilities of the social sciences, have less justification than have others for taking this as a settled and permanent condition. But apart

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from this there are a number of local factors which help to make the indifference intelligible, if not excusable.

ONE SUCH FACTOR is the process by which the scope of philosophy in Britain has been progressively narrowed in the last sixty years, a process which has gone hand in hand with the professionalising of the subject.

At the end of the 19th century, when Absolute Idealism was in its heyday, a philosopher was expected to take all knowledge for his province; natural science, mathematics, history, politics, law, morals, art, religion—there was nothing on which he might not be called on to pronounce. But the success of the philosophical revolution initiated by Russell, together with the ever increasing complexity of what old-fashioned philosophers called the special sciences, changed all that. For a time it was common to demand of philosophers a special interest in, and acquaintance with, developments in the physical sciences; the work of C. D. Broad in the 'twenties is a typical product of this period. But as the influence of Russell gave way to that of Moore and Wittgenstein, British philosophers abandoned even that interest.

Moore said in his autobiography that what stimulated him to philosophise was not anything outside philosophy but the strange things which other philosophers said; to many of his successors this pronouncement seems utterly unsurprising. For them philosophy begins, and apparently ends, when an unusual construction is put upon a number of key terms, such as "know," "certain," "true," "good," "free," which are in the commonest everyday use; and no special knowledge is required for its successful prosecution, though a special sort of skill is. If it were suggested to such a philosopher that he should widen his horizons and take account of, for instance, the apparently paradoxical ideas of physicists about simultaneity he would reply, in the first place, that he had enough on his hands already with the problems of perception and of morals, and secondly that in any case he was not qualified to deal with such highly technical matters. Only perhaps if it were a case of elucidating some concept in mathematics would he wonder whether he should not make it his business to acquire the necessary knowledge, thanks to the special relationship between mathematics and logic.

IT MAY BE SAID that the phase I have been describing is rapidly passing away, and that British philosophers are returning to some of the fields cultivated by their predecessors, but returning with an altogether surer awareness of what is required if successful work is to be accomplished there. And it is certainly true that excellent work has been published in Britain in recent years on philosophy of law, philosophy of religion, even on philosophy of history.

But there remains a special reason why many British philosophers tend to play down the importance of philosophical problems about history. History was looked on with particular favour by some of the Idealists, particularly the later Idealists, who were apt to praise it as affording "concrete" knowledge in contrast to the "abstractions" proffered by mathematics and the physical sciences. Idealism is no longer a force in the British philosophical world, but the antipathy it once provoked has not entirely disappeared, nor has the accompanying animus against philosophy of history. It is still felt sometimes that the object of that supposed branch of study could only be to advance inflated claims on history's behalf, and that once these were discounted its whole *raison d'être* must disappear. There would then be no more reason, as I remember a former Oxford colleague once arguing, for there to be a special branch of philosophy concerned with history than for there to be a special branch of philosophy concerned with geography.

IT SEEMS TO ME that this phase too is passing. The reputation of Collingwood, once thought of as no better than a brilliant and perverse amateur, has been rising steadily in recent years. The studies in the logic of historical explanation published by Messrs. Gardiner and Dray, with the earlier work on the same subject by Professor Popper, have ensured philosophical respectability for at least one topic in philosophy of history.* But though it now seems likely that more British philosophers will be giving attention to history in the immediate future than in the immediate past, it is one thing to say this and quite another to claim that philosophy of history will be able to claim the general recognition granted to philosophy of science. Before that can be done it will be necessary to shake historians in Great Britain from their dogmatic slumbers, to make them aware of the width of the gap between what they are prepared to offer and what the public expects of them, and to stir real controversy in their ranks about the point

* The great merit of Professor Carr's recent book (which appeared when this essay was already in proof) is that it poses fundamental questions about the nature and possibilities of the subject in a way which is quite new among British historians in the present century. It is to be hoped that Professor Carr's colleagues will recognise these questions as being important in themselves, and not merely dismiss them out of dissatisfaction with Carr's own answers

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and purpose of their studies. Failing that, philosophy of history can remain only a pale ghost of a subject, lacking the blood which would give it life.

W. H. Walsh

Inside the Twist

THE TWIST could scarcely have made its appearance in Britain at a more convenient time for the dance promoters. By last autumn, rock'n'roll was beginning to sag in popularity, and dance-hall attendances clearly needed some fresh stimulus. With the Christmas season ahead, and the weary, stale, flat and unprofitable early months of the New Year to follow, a new gimmick was urgently required. The Twist was ready at hand. Once discovered, it was exploited by a campaign of such speed and efficiency that within weeks it had become a national craze. By comparison, the campaign for "rock" had been ill-concerted and funereal in pace. The machine of exploitation had come a long way since then.

Yet the Twist had, in fact, been in cold storage for over a year. Chubby Checker, the 20-year-old chicken-plucker from Philadelphia who was first to mount this latest band-wagon, had brought out his first British record in September, 1960, titled simply "The Twist." Nobody paid the slightest attention. Even in America, most of the big promoters were still looking hard the other way.

Then, in the summer of 1961, the Twist caught fire in the Parisian clubs. It became thereby worthy of acceptance as a status-symbol by the West End "smart set." What was good enough for Paris was, with suitable refinement of course, good enough for them. When Hélène Cordet tentatively introduced the Twist at her *French Club*, it flopped at first, but took quickly enough at the *Saddle Room* in October. It was new; it was exclusive; it was easy to do (the twisting of the feet recalled the Charleston); they were not doing it at the *palais de danse*; and, best of all, it was not American. Perhaps it was as well that the smart set had not heard of Chubby Checker, who was at this time getting considerably less chubby (39 pounds down in a year) showing America how the Twist was meant to be done.

By this time, of course, the dance-hall promoters were beginning to hear whispers from their contacts across the Atlantic that a new and profitable craze might be on the way. Philip Nathan, editor of *Dance News*, the publicity organ of Mecca's 45 ballrooms (with a weekly readership of over 100,000 in and around the dance-halls), wired Arthur Murray in New York for pictures. Murray, who owns a chain of dancing schools across America, was already working hard to launch the Twist there.

Nathan ran a series of articles explaining the Twist to an audience still only mildly interested. He took the "Miss World" contestants to the Lyceum, and initiated them in the mysteries of the new dance. Rank, with a chain of 24 ballrooms, hired Peppi & his New York Twisters for a tour of the dozen or so halls where they felt the Twist might take on. But the teenage market, which had allowed itself to be converted to rock'n'roll only after lengthy persuasion, was not ready to change idols easily. As Mecca explain, rock'n'roll was just right for them—"it has the correct amount of physical contact for that age-group. At 14 to 16, you want to hold hands. The passionate embraces come later." Perhaps that is why, even now, the palais is still rocking to the Twist.

NATURALLY ENOUGH, the record companies were not slow to follow. EMI (issuing under eight labels, including Capitol, Columbia, Parlophone, and MGM), who had issued the first Twist disc, wanted to recoup their earlier losses. Perhaps it was their initial failure which made them wary of launching a major campaign at this stage, and in fact they spent less than £5,000 spreading the Twist mystique in the early months. But they did set off a slow chain reaction among other eager promoters. They sought the help of Arthur Murray's British dance-school chain, who then explained the Twist on one of Mecca's Radio Luxembourg programmes, *Monday Spectacular*. With every Twist record sold went a sheet of dancing instructions. Even so, the record empires had to wait until after Christmas before sales began to soar.

Most of the reputable teachers of dancing turned up their noses when they were asked to feature the Twist. When Jimmy Phillips of the KPM Music Company, which had the copyright of Chubby Checker's original song, rang Victor Sylvester, "the King of the Ballroom" (BBC Dancing Club, headpiece of Rank's 20 dancing clubs) would not hear of it. The hard truth was that the dancing teachers could not yet see quick profit in a gimmick which had not become popular. As one said later: "It was so simple that I couldn't see how it could be a money-spinner."

Then, just before Christmas, came the breakthrough. The film companies in America had been slow to evaluate the Twist's possibilities. When they did decide to commit it to celluloid,

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they did so in a hurry. Columbia's *Twist Around the Clock* (deliberately echoing *Rock Around the Clock*) was conceived and made inside two months. "We needed it fast if we were going to cash in," said Pat Williamson, the company's publicity manager in Britain. At 48 hours' notice, he summoned 700 teenagers to a special preview (sacrificing Brigitte Bardot for a night) and waited for the reaction.

Within ten minutes, teenagers were standing in the foyer resting their backs. The theatre seats weren't big enough to twist in, they said. That was good enough for Columbia. They began a £7,500 publicity campaign. London dancing schools were persuaded to give Twist lessons. When the film went out via the Rank cinemas in the provinces, there were Rank ballrooms handy to back any stunts they cared to arrange. The record companies leapt at the chance of joint promotions. But for the most part Columbia's work was done for them by the Press and television. They could not give widespread coverage to a new record, but a film *première* in London was a very convenient peg on which to hang "splash" treatment. Now all the promoters claim the credit for launching the Twist. Without the contagious rash of Press features and TV programmes, they might still be struggling.

Another film company, Paramount, produced a Twist feature (*"Hey, Let's Twist"*) just before the Columbia version. More cautiously, they ran it as second string to Jerry Lewis's *"Errand Boy."* When the London run started, the ubiquitous Arthur Murray staged a demonstration in the foyer. The fact that the film had been shot in the Peppermint Lounge (New York's Twist centre) encouraged EMI to collaborate by plugging a record called *The Peppermint Twist.* Paramount were also delighted to be able to persuade "respectable West End dress shops like Fenwick's" to put picture displays in their windows.

How DID the film companies propose to sell the Twist to a still apathetic teenage audience? Columbia's campaign book for the cinema managers coins new superlatives—"it's Twisterrific"—and is frank enough about the sort of appeal they hoped *Twist Around the Clock* might have. "BETTER 'N BOOGIE, JUMPIER 'N JIVE, RACIER 'N ROCK," it exults, and adds "SEXIER 'N SWING." The king-pin of the campaign was, of course, to be Chubby Checker himself, star of the film—"more familiarly known as *Our Leader.*" No doubt they calculated that the label would have no unpleasant association for the post-war generation. Records and throwaways liberally distributed were expected to laud this new and more affable *Führer.*

The local cinema manager was also instructed to get in touch with as many stores as possible, so that they might give all their goods a "Twist angle." "If you say it often enough, they have to do it," explained Pat Williamson. Ladies' wear stores could feature "fashions with a Twist." Jewellery shops could display wrist watches with the blandishment "A beautiful Twist for your wrist." For restaurants, a headed menu card or overprinted serviette offering a special dish—"Add a new Twist to your appetite"—was suggested. And beauty parlours would surely have little trouble in featuring a new hair-do. "The Twist," described as "a spiral upsweep coiffure." This in addition to Twist contests at the local palais (prizes for the most relaxed—cutest—oddest—youngest—most unusual Twisters) and a juke-box in the cinema foyer adjusted so that it could be played without inserting a coin was the pattern of a campaign designed to harness every consumer appetite to the new band-wagon.

Sadly for Columbia, all their ingenuity did not bear the fruit they anticipated. *Twist Around the Clock* is only expected to gross half the takings of its illustrious predecessor *Rock Around the Clock.* Why was it a comparative failure? The film was launched on to a mass market not sufficiently saturated to accept it, and its star was still not the national figure which Bill Haley & his Comets had become by the time the *Rock* film was issued. But Columbia felt there was another reason. "I don't think it has the same emotional appeal as the Rock movie," said Pat Williamson. "To use the jargon, it's cooler, it doesn't parade sexual stimulation in the same way. The rock music is much more jungly. . . ."

So although the film companies did not reap the harvest they did sow the whirlwind. Within a matter of weeks the Twist had soared to national popularity. On the heels of the London premières, the record boom began in earnest. London record stores like Imhof's, who had thrown out all their Twist records, hurriedly brought them back again. The first Twist long-playing disc appeared at Christmas with no titles and no sleeve and sold as fast as it could be produced.

Now THE BAND-WAGON was gaining rapid momentum—and everybody was ready to jump on. For some, it was providentially convenient. Dress manufacturers like Martha Hill had been turning out models with flared skirts since the spring of 1961. "At first, nobody would accept them," said Mrs. Fakhry, the managing director. "All the girls just looked down their noses and said they were sticking to straight skirts." Not until July did West End shops like Fenwick's

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begin to stock flared dresses in any quantity, and even then sales were not particularly healthy.

The Twist transformed the situation. It gave impetus for a new sales drive. "When the Twist came out, I said 'This is the dress for the Twist' and we linked the two," said one sales manager. Since then her store has sold 3,500 dresses (between £5 and £8), 1,000 skirts (between £3 and £4) and 3,000 Twist necklaces (at 18s. 11d.)—all at an average profit of 27 per cent. Woollands, more fashionable yet in Knightsbridge, had window displays in mid-January showing vigorous Twisters in action at the Saddle Room, and offered chic dresses for the occasion at anything from £8 to £20, with a Dior model at £50 for the particularly affluent. Everybody in the dress trade was delighted. "This is usually a bad time of year for us," said one executive, with a most unseasonable grin on her face. As the fashion spread, the popular department stores began displaying cheaper models for the provincial palais crowd. By the middle of February, one large Manchester store was selling 1,500 a week at 49s. 11d. each.

Enterprising shoe manufacturers were almost as quick to exploit the new market. Wyles Shoes of Derby are one such. They, too, had a problem. They had acquired a licence to produce an American-designed shoe—a casual, flat-heeled moccasin—with the idea of launching it during the summer months. But, as the managing director, Mr. N. T. Griffin, said: "They weren't suitable for outdoor wear before Easter and yet we wanted to get them out if we could. When I heard of the Twist, I thought this was an excellent way of putting them on the market quickly and getting them established before the summer." So "Twisties" made their appearance at 25s. 11d. a pair (and a net profit of something like 10 per cent). Wyles began producing in mid-February. They hope to retail 50,000 pairs in the next few months. They have promoted Twist competitions at dance-halls in Hull, Derby and Liverpool. With every pair of "Twisties" sold goes a photograph of Chubby Checker (supplied by Columbia) and a free dance-instruction leaflet. The campaign to date has only cost them between £600 and £700.

Other companies saw to it that the Twist very soon had a literature of its own. Peter Wolfe of *Britannia Books* observed the way in which the dance was being promoted by the record empires. He spoke to Philip Nathan at *Dance News* and asked him to recommend somebody who could produce a book quickly enough to head off anybody else with the same idea. Nathan suggested Nornie Dwyer. Nornie Dwyer was once a top-ranking exhibition dancer and now teaches many of Britain's teachers of dancing. She specialises in popularising new numbers. "I always see what's going—whether it's good or not," she explains.

Nornie Dwyer came back from her Christmas holiday one Monday having done some preliminary work—and she had completed the book by Friday. Even then she was delayed by the selection of pictures which came from France to illustrate the book—many of which seemed to her plainly suggestive. The Twist had to be civilised for the British audience. These problems of taste were swiftly vanquished—and *Dance the Twist* appeared as a paper-back at 2s. 6d. on January 20. On the cover were dancers from the Columbia film.

The first print of 25,000 was sold out in ten days (at a profit of roughly 5d. a copy). And of course Nornie Dwyer expounded the Twist to her own pupils. "We needed a new gimmick," she recalls. "I was teaching rock'n'roll, but it was obvious that the kids wanted something else. I helped to convince other teachers of dancing, and in fact got more letters after my Twist lectures than I had ever had before. They came mainly from people who had come with doubts and had changed their minds."

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By this time, of course, it was profitable to change your mind if you were a dance instructor. A teacher in Peterborough drew an extra 150 pupils when he advertised his intention to insert a special session on the Twist. Another teacher in the London suburbs calculates that he has been earning an extra £18 or £20 a week with special Twist classes. One leading early exponent of the dance has collected £300 within two months.

If teachers of dancing like Nornie Dwyer had done something to civilise the Twist, they had their own appreciation of its appeal. "It could be a sex outlet," says Miss Dwyer. "In the Twist we are exhibitionists, though at the same time you are showing off to your own sex too. To some of them, it's like a drug. I agree that it can be horrible—but, as my husband says, they've been doing that sort of thing since the beginning of man." The interesting thing to her was that the dance had taken on with a much older age-group at the same time—the roaring forties. "The older folks like it because you move quite separately and therefore don't have to worry about your partner's feet. And the movements are so easy." Indeed, the simplicity of the dance and its weight-reducing properties—"this is a much nicer way of slimming than cutting out food" as one over-40 exuberantly put it—have made the Twist the first dance craze which is more than a new routine tailored for the teenage market.

By the end of February, of course, the record companies had begun to make substantial profits. EMI had sold 1,500,000 Twist discs at an average price of 6s. 9d., Decca 800,000 at the same cost. The Mecca dance-halls were getting 40,000 extra customers a week (average admission price in the chain is 3s. 6d.), and Rank were also 10 per cent. better off in their more popular halls.

The film companies were still somewhat bruised at their early failures—Columbia spoke of holding their second picture, *"Don't Knock the Twist,"* until the dance had really caught fire—but the dance-hall empires were perfectly ready to launch major campaigns. Mecca, for instance, are currently promoting the Twist Championships of Great Britain in a joint venture with Player's cigarettes—and they are putting £10,000 into the promotion. They are out to make money while the Twist is still widely popular. "It won't last as long as rock'n'roll," said one of their executives, "because there is not the same excitement in the music."

Philip Nathan believes that the drive to popularise the Twist is "the most intensive public campaign for a dance known to history. By comparison, rock'n'roll just grew on people." The Twist, on the other hand, was artificially cultivated by a host of alert salesmen ready to leap aboard any band-wagon which presented itself. Most of them were not particularly concerned what it was they were selling. After all, they had to move quickly to get aboard at all.

Graham Turner

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BOOKS & WRITERS

The History of Our Friends

On Paul Goodman — By MARCUS CUNLIFFE

THE WRITING of the American Paul Goodman is not well-known in Europe. The portion that is known is not well-regarded, to judge from the reaction to his *Growing Up Absurd* when it was published last year by Gollancz. Richard Hoggart had some sympathy for its viewpoint. Other reviewers, including Denis Brogan and Geoffrey Gorer, found it ill-written, ill-informed, and ill-argued. In common with certain American critics they complained that in more than one sense Paul Goodman did not know what he was talking about. His theme was the plight of the young in the United States, growing up in a society that fails to offer them worthwhile "manly" occupations or any true awareness or possibility of living in a community. The outcome in his eyes is a mass of disaffected, rebellious, or merely bored youngsters, whose destructive tendencies ought to be interpreted in this light: ought indeed even to be welcomed as signs of a healthy if distorted passion, instead of being solemnly deplored at conferences on juvenile delinquency. But for Goodman's British critics his diagnosis is incoherent; his proposed cures involve an impracticable mixture of anarchism and regimentation. To Geoffrey Gorer, *Growing Up Absurd* falls into Saki's category of "reproving books." Though the category would embrace works such as *Erewhon* and *News from Nowhere*, Mr. Gorer quotes a passage from Goodman to suggest a certain affinity with another, debased example of the genre—*Mein Kampf*.

It cannot be claimed that Mr. Goodman's writings have been widely acclaimed in his own country either, at least not until quite recently. But they are now being taken seriously in the United States; and *Growing Up Absurd* found a larger and more attentive audience than in Britain. Portions of the book first appeared in that excellent magazine *Commentary*, which was where I first read them. I shared the impression of *Commentary*'s editors that Mr. Goodman had something important to say and was saying it with considerable power. I was also acquainted with previous books by the author—*Communitas*, for instance, written in collaboration with his architect-brother Percy Goodman (1947), and the long novel called *The Empire City* (1959) which Paul Goodman began to write in 1939. Both of these are, incidentally, cited in *Growing Up Absurd*. So it was evident that he had been working out his notions for a fairly long time. It also seemed evident that for some reason his notions had not "travelled" very well, in somewhat the same way perhaps that the poetry of William Carlos Williams has failed to win any large audience on this side of the Atlantic.*

ONE REASON MAY be that Paul Goodman is a special breed of American. He is a native of the Empire City, New York, and that in itself, for an articulate, sensitive person, is a comprehensive fate. He is an intellectual and a Jew. A glance through a few issues of *Commentary* indicates what this combination may entail. A blend of extreme parochialism and extreme cosmopolitanism, for example; a deeply urban spirit, which is not incompatible with an immense excitement at the possibilities of rural life; a bitter and despairing conviction that existence is almost impossible in New York, yet inconceivable elsewhere; a conviction too that public affairs are deeply corrupt (New York provides daily documentation); a dizzying awareness of being both an insider and an outsider; access to and involvement in a Jewish tradition which embraces learning, tragedy, and slapstick; a style of conversation which ranges from private jokes to fiercely erudite argument, from cynicism to utopianism. It is often said that there is no collective intellectual life in New York, at least not in comparison with

* *The State of Nature* (Vanguard Press, N.Y., 1946); *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life* (with Percy Goodman, 1947; revised in paperback edition, Vintage Books, N.Y., 1960); *The Empire City*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1959); *Our Visit to Niagara* (Horizon, N.Y., 1960); *Growing Up Absurd* (Gollancz); *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals* (Random House, N.Y., 1962).

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that of London. In my observation that is untrue. There may not be as many overlappings as in London; things may not be as snug. But there is a discourse of intellectuals, especially of Jewish intellectuals, that has no counterpart in London. The tone is beautifully caught in Delmore Schwartz's long story, *The World Is A Wedding*; and Paul Goodman too is thoroughly at home with it:

> I spoke up and said: "No matter how much you all repel and avoid one another, you're all much more friends than you know. Allow me. I can explain it to you. We people are more personally engaged in what we do than the average folk, and therefore as we turn from one of our activities to another, we again find one another there. Because everything is of a piece. And likewise, unlike the ordinary folk, if two of us find we have one acquaintance in common, we will prove to have three hundred in common, for we have these activities in common. We have gone to the same marginal schools; we have praised to the skies the dancer whom the rest of New York has not yet heard of; and if one of us steals off to a secluded coast that seems to us promising, he will meet another one of us walking naked toward him up King's Beach."
>
> "Oh, God, how true!" groaned Arthur, and without doubt they all glared at me with hatred for explaining to them the Theory of Our Friends.
>
> "I'm not so overjoyed about it either, I assure you," I said, stung, "to come upon your same faces everywhere! Nevertheless, I'll write it down, the history of our friends."
>
> (*The Empire City*)

This is Goodman's context, or a significant part of it. Its appeal is perhaps less than universal. It is half-comically, half-seriously didactic ("Allow me. I can explain it to you"); its dialogues are stilted, as in real life, yet in a way we are reluctant to accept in fiction. The tone is also rather gritty, even quarrelsome, and private. The sympathy between participants is deep, yet deeply flawed with exasperation. A character in Delmore Schwartz's story claims that for years she has never been allowed to finish a sentence. Everyone thinks that he has a subtle understanding of everyone else, but that he himself is misunderstood.

THE WRITER who comes out of this environment runs grave risks. At odds with the larger American society, he is often unable to make any peace with it, or to communicate the peculiar fevers of his own smaller society to non-members. His novels and stories sometimes have the air of being translations from another tongue. Or they turn into sociology, into diatribe, into fantasy, into autobiography. The audience is always in danger of dwindling, the

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circle of participants shrinks: in the case of Salinger to the hermetic self-absorption of one family, the Glass Family, in a West Side apartment; in the case of Norman Mailer, to the first person singular, the author as his own principal subject.

This is not to maintain that every New York Jewish writer is identical with every other one, but only to suggest that they have some elements in common which tend to give their work both a local and a placeless quality. "My attempt," Paul Goodman wrote some years ago, "is to reinforce the continuity between personal and public concern by drawing on the nature prior to individuality. I accept most of the propositions of Aristotle, Kant, Marx, and Freud." He may no longer have quite the same allegiances; still, they indicate his range, and so does the title of his newest book, *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals*. The volume that he brought out with his brother, *Communitas*, has the subtitle *Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life*. It offers a radical criticism of modern urban life, and with splendid assurance proposes to rebuild Manhattan. But the scheme is radical rather than grandiose; indeed the authors take sharp issue with grandiose architect-reformers such as Buckminster Fuller and Le Corbusier; and the plan for Manhattan (to put the business district and the main highways in the centre of the island, so that the waterfronts can be reclaimed for residential areas) is perfectly sensible.

To me, this freshness of approach is also typical of *Growing Up Absurd*. The book can be faulted in lots of ways. The countryside seems a curiously unreal zone to Goodman (though perhaps much of the American countryside *is* unreal—can we even apply the word "countryside" to it?). Women have an oddly subordinate and primitive role in his scheme of things. His dissatisfactions are so complete that one wonders at moments why he bothers with palliatives. It could be said against him, as against other radicals, that he exaggerates both the wickedness of the existing social order and the innate virtues of human nature, the capacity of mankind to make a genuine fresh start. He is fond of great cities, and rightly appreciative of the opportunities they provide for privacy and dissidence; but do they not concentrate and encourage all the worst corruptions of our society? Anarchists can only manage to survive, undetected, in large cities: smaller communities would soon root them out. Yet thoroughgoing anarchism would I think entail the abolition of the metropolis.

Still, some of these are fundamental dilemmas rather than confusions in Paul Goodman's mind. The refreshing feature is his readiness to offer fundamental condemnations and fundamental solutions. There is a clumsy sweetness about his writing. He has a far more noble vision than other "public scolds" such as Vance Packard, who are basically committed to the standards they deplore. Another refreshing feature is that Americans seem ready to listen to a Goodman as well as to a Packard. Despite an apparent aversion to ideology, the injunction to THINK BIG is in fact being followed in contemporary America. The inverted Utopianism of the strategic planners, who are prepared to contemplate prodigious destruction, death, and upheaval, makes the Utopianism of a Goodman seem modest. And his version is much closer to William Morris, though like other reformers he is tempted to *impose* improvement, to risk turning the victims into ants so that they may eventually become grasshoppers. He is not a systematic thinker, any more than Emerson or Blake. But he has something of their generosity, their imaginative reach. Perhaps this is why his best work, at least to my mind, is his fiction, not his formal essays. Visions cannot be stated, they must be conveyed: though it must be admitted that Paul Goodman's fiction is often explicitly didactic.

Take for example the collection of pieces called *The Facts of Life*, which includes several stories and a play (*Jonah*). Some of these have a gentle, dreamlike quality reminiscent of E. M. Forster's *The Celestial Omnibus*. Others, especially the play, have the raucous irony of *The Empire City*. The first story, "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five" (1936), discusses the ecology of an American district, in its temporal layers, as it can be seen on foot:

1. The rough brook poppling among the green rocks and, under the high pines roundabout, the quiet carpet of brown needles. . . .
2. A stony field baking in the sun, a few cattle penned in with a wall of stones and a wooden fence; the land cleared but full of stumps, planted with wild grass for grazing and four trees where the cows can lie down.
3. A cultivated field with tomato vines, a sow lying in the mud nuzzled at by seven sucklings; a barn with a nag, a well with a windlass. (You see how crowded the scene now becomes.) A wire chicken-house strewn with corn grains, and loud with the four sounds of clucking, cackling, crying, and crowing; and a post box of the RFD.
4. Next is the tarred road, the tar spattered on the brittle leaves of the huckleberry bushes, and the reek of gasoline; a road turning and bumpy—the wreck of an old Packard . . . ; telegraph poles leaning in different directions; a red gasoline filling pump (painted over for the third time) outside a hut of corrugated

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iron. (This Age of Iron is the most crowded of all.) The billboard CASTORIA, "children cry for it."

5. And most recent is the concrete speedway, Route 4W, bright buff broad way across the State, crossing valleys and hills with hardly a rise or fall; the road signs are made of little mirrors that catch the headlights or the sun and burst into brilliance; the bridges are of grey steel. Lying on the road, like a metal jewel, is a smashed radio tube, the plate, grid, and filament all entangled.

In another admirable story, "A Ceremonial," there is the same acute and equable observation. This story is set in the future, "not long after the establishment among us of reasonable institutions," and deals with the restoration of the spoiled landscape, at a ritual with music when some billboards are pushed down. The scene is full of dignity, tenderness, and exaltation. It is unashamedly intellectual—there is a close analysis of a Beethoven quartet and its effect upon the listeners—yet simple, and movingly far-fetched. A third story, "The Commodity Embodied in Bread," is likewise an intellectual exercise, of a different order. Goodman illustrates a statement by Karl Marx about the meaning of Commodities by means of a delightful anecdote about a loaf of wrapped bread brought home from a supermarket:

> Tobias tore the wrapper of the loaf of bread, and the exchange-value departed from the Commodity.
>
> This sacrament—this service—this sacrifice of the real being of the Commodity—*sealed* and *revivified* the identification of Tobias and his family with the unity of the imperial Economy.

In a fourth anecdote, "The University in Exile," Goodman describes with brilliant sympathy the somewhat supercilious anguish of European intellectuals who have escaped to the United States and grasp enough of a conversation among Americans to despise its low level, but not enough to dominate it:

> Here was a problem in wild mental acrobatics: to use only the vocabulary and ideas of the news reports and yet, by irony or contradictions, to avoid the context of idiocy, or at least to indicate that one's-self was not such an idiot.
>
> The net result was that the Americans thought they were complete idiots.

THESE and other kinds of problems are discussed at far greater length in Paul Goodman's novel, *The Empire City*. It is a sort of serial testament to the life of the intellect in New York. Parts of it had appeared as separate works: *The Grand Piano* (1942), *State of Nature* (1946), and *The Dead of Spring* (1950). These are concerned with pre-war, wartime, and post-war America. A later section, *The Holy Terror*, is described as an account of

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"modern times." Judged as a conventional novel, *Empire City* is a failure. It is full of random dialogues and episodes. The main characters might rather be described as mouthpieces of the author, though certainly each has his particular idiosyncrasy. Several are killed off, with a kind of brutal affection. The hero, Horatio Alger, is a little boy when first encountered: a tough city-child of devastating candour and intelligence. His brother Lothair is a musician of genius. There is an old financier, Hugo Eliphaz, who turns the doctrines of capitalism upside down. There is a subtle Dutchman, Piet Duyck Colijn van der Meer. There is Horatio's sister Laura, who becomes an architect. These and their wives and children and friends move through the history of twenty years in a complex carnival, exulting, observing, going mad, quarrelling, expounding, becoming reconciled. Some of their notions are too notional, and some are repetitious. But these characters-as-humours are never fatuous, and never trivial. Nor is their creator smug about what he and they can accomplish:

> We hold our meeting in a draughty room on Broadway and there is a picture of sweet old Prince Kropotkin on the wall....
>
> Problems for which no one can suggest anything practical. Jointly we cannot invent anything practical either; we have exhausted the strength of fraternity....
>
> The hard problem is that we do know, by the simplest reasoning from the most obvious evidences, how everyone could easily live well. But this has long been known and eloquently told. The knowledge of it has not made any difference. Yet what is there to exchange at a meeting of minds, except knowledge?
>
> We need an impulse of the limbs! But whatever motion occurs to us to make is senseless. Therefore, we are poised on chairs and are beginning to wear little private smiles.

Sometimes the disquisition is pure fantasy, as when the Dutchman tells of an adventure as a spaceman, or in a magnificent and mythical evocation of the Piazza San Marco in Venice. At the end of this History of Our Friends, the survivors are growing older, more prosperous, and more resigned. They are less interested in economics and more absorbed in psychoanalysis. Their smiles are more private. But there is still the anger, the knowledge of friendship, and the yearning for Jerusalem. At the close, considering the force of the Enemy, Horace reckons up his counter-weapons,

> the weapons that we have that do not weight one down. First there is the simple sling and shot that hits the booby on the brow. Second, there is the eloquent trumpet that makes the walls fall down. And third, the arrows of desire.

Svevo and Canetti

Confessions of Zeno and **As a Man Grows Older.** By ITALO SVEVO. Translated by BERYL DE ZOËTE. *Secker & Warburg*, 25s. and 18s.

Auto-da-fé. By ELIAS CANETTI. Translated by C. V. WEDGWOOD. *Cape*, 21s.

A FRIEND of mine once embarked on a course of psycho-analytical treatment. It continued for years. It uncovered nothing. "We must dig deep," said the analyst. They dug deep, the two of them, but uncovered nothing. My friend never dreamt, except for an occasional anxiety dream about forgetting his next appointment with the analyst. Out of guilt towards the disappointed analyst he began to invent dreams. Later, out of guilt towards his disappointed patient, the analyst reduced his fees. Eventually, out of mutual disappointment, they forgot to make or to keep any further appointments. My friend was the most normal person I have ever known: the reading of books and, to a lesser extent, the observation of his contemporaries had caused him to suppose that there was something wrong with him.

The *Confessions of Zeno* purport to have been written at the suggestion of Zeno's analyst, who supplies a nicely pompous preface. Towards the end Zeno cries, "How can I any longer endure to be in the company of that ridiculous man, with his would-be penetrating eye, and the intolerable conceit that allows him to group all the phenomena in the world round his grand new theory?" For Zeno's trouble has been diagnosed as that of Oedipus: which enchants him (what a magnificent pedigree the disease possesses!) but doesn't, even in 1915, deceive him. Zeno too has invented dreams to satisfy his master. The novel has been said to illustrate Freudian theory: if so, then *Auto-da-fé* can be said to illustrate the theory that the Eternal Womanly leads us Upwards. The association with Sophocles may titillate Zeno's vanity, but neither his common sense nor his sense of humour nor his status in the Triestine bourgeoisie nor his vanity will permit for long this assimilation to a barbarous, dead mythology. Zeno is alive, civilized and very real. He remarks of his analyst, "He must be the only person in the world who, hearing that I wanted to go to bed with two lovely women, must rack his brains to try and find a reason for it!"

No, Zeno is a notably normal and healthy man. Rich enough not to have to do any real work, he has time to suppose that there must be something wrong with him. He is the most cheerful type of *malade imaginaire*, since his malady never prevents him from doing or not doing whatever he would have done or not

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done anyway. The "search for health" is itself imaginary, a device for filling in the time between adventures and for justifying (Zeno enjoys big words even though he doesn't trust them) his immense interest in himself. "Health cannot analyse itself even if it looks at itself in the glass. It is only we invalids who can know anything about ourselves." It must be his "illness" (or perhaps the "search for health") which causes him to take a mistress, seeing that he genuinely loves and admires his wife. It must be the same which causes him to give up his mistress—or causes him to cause her to give him up—seeing that she is a well-nigh perfect mistress. He can tell us so, but he refuses to have his analyst saying the same thing. Common sense is against it; and, anyway, one expects better things from doctors.

When the *Confessions* first appeared in English in 1930, Frank Swinnerton spoke aptly of its "amusing and mischievous illustrations of the adjustments of conscience by which sinners are able to continue respecting themselves." The young Zeno finds he has a rival in love: Guido, healthy, confident, and an accomplished violinist. In his intense jealousy Zeno, himself a mediocre musician, finds consolation in the thought that Guido's excellent performance is really a sign of inferiority: "his arm did not tremble, even in the presence of Bach." Much later, when he is about to take a mistress, he falls ill with conscience, and his wife assumes that this suffering is caused by the imminent marriage of Ada, her sister and his first love, to Guido. Zeno's indignation at once dispels the pangs of conscience. "I honestly felt that she was wronging me; I was not guilty of such a crime as that." A similar touch occurs in *As a Man Grows Older*, when Emilio taxes his mistress with infidelity: she has been seen with another man, in a café, drinking chocolate. Angiolina flares up in virtuous indignation: "Chocolate! I who simply can't endure it! The idea of my drinking chocolate!"

Much of the humour of the *Confessions* derives from the fact that Zeno *sometimes* deceives himself or errs in interpretation. During his honeymoon, "I was prone to assume the dignified pose of an equestrian statue," he tells us amusedly. The honeymoon was spent in Italy, visiting the galleries, and Zeno misses the point of Augusta's remark, reported directly after: "It is lucky one only has to visit museums on one's honeymoon, and then never again!" Any interpretation of that, other than the surface meaning, wouldn't fit in with his settled conception of his wife as "the personification of health"—that is, a splendid woman, but not over-bright. But if Zeno always, or mostly, deceived himself—and was therefore tediously

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striving to deceive us—his company would be intolerable over four hundred pages. A real *malade imaginaire* is deceiving himself: whereas Zeno is an imaginary *malade imaginaire*. The play of the *Confessions* is between self-deception, engaging attempts at deceiving the reader, and truth-telling. (An instance of the latter is when he, the great self-analyser, the leading expert in Zenology, points out that "to explain to somebody how he is made is only another way of authorising him to do as he likes.") And what emerges from this play is, not a very impressive character admittedly, but the truth about Zeno.

The truth about Zeno's ill health is that he is one of the toughest characters in fiction: he needs to be, if he is to think about himself so avidly without turning into an absolute monster or disintegrating into thin air. It is his *conception* of health that is mistaken, as is revealed in his telling us with his usual attractive enthusiasm how much better his life has been than that of the so-called normal healthy man, who "except at certain moments, beats or would like to beat his mistress every day." In the end Guido, competent, healthy and extravert, ruins himself and commits suicide: and it is left to Zeno, dilettante and invalid, to repair the family fortunes.

War breaks out in the last pages, and we are reminded of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. But Zeno is a Latin version of Hans Castorp, at full length and somewhat averse to allegory; he is himself his own magic mountain; he is educating or re-educating himself throughout his life; where Castorp is a "still unwritten page", Zeno is scribbled over with footnotes. Castorp is teutonically concerned with Life. Philosophical and political forces, in the shape of his co-patients Naphta and Settembrini, battle for his soul. Life itself, it seems, in the shape or shapelessness of Mynheer Peeperkorn, sweeps him off his feet, temporarily at any rate. Our last sight of him is on the battlefield of 1914, among bursting shells. Zeno, at the end of his confessions, goes out to find some roses for his daughter, inadvertently crosses a military frontier, becomes temporarily separated from his family, and is enabled—by the war—to make a lot of money. "I really am well, absolutely well. ... Of course I have pains from time to time, but what do they matter when my health is perfect?" It was his business that cured him—true, this is the first time he has done any real work on his own—and, he says, he would like his late analyst to know it.

As a Man Grows Older, published twenty-five years earlier, has been held by Joyce and others to be Svevo's best work, but I cannot imagine that many people would give up the *Confessions* for it. Emilio is a vaguely literary bachelor, also of Trieste, who falls vaguely in love with Angiolina, not definitely enough to marry her, but enough to be indignant and hurt when she deceives him, as (it is clear to the reader) she is practically bound to do in the given circumstances. There are foretastes of Zeno. For instance, Emilio has banished religion from his own home, but is gratified and reassured to find that his intended mistress is a believer. "What a blessed thing religion was!" We recall Zeno's repeated statement that, if *he* were religious himself, he would spend all day in church, nothing else in the world would matter. Zeno, though, would have been too worldly to attribute rapid progress with a new lady friend to the fact that "she had found him so reasonable that she felt she could trust him completely."

The most remarkable part of this novel concerns Amalia, Emilio's spinster sister. Her life is colourless; her delirium and death, described at length and in lucid and dramatic detail, are intensely moving, and throw the rest of the book (as I suppose the moral requires) into the shade. There is nothing in the *Confessions* to compare with this, for Zeno's father exists only as an adjunct to Zeno, or to Zeno's "disease," and Guido's death is more comic than tragic, besides (as is often the case with suicide) lacking documentation. But apart from Amalia, *As a*

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Man Grows Older cannot compete with the *Confessions*: much of the time it is merely embarrassing to watch Emilio. Nonetheless it has a good deal of quiet charm, often a deliberately faded charm, and it is altogether innocent of straining after effect or significance. (Miss de Zoëte's versions of both novels, perhaps it is not too late to say, are altogether admirable.)

If Zeno is completely sane, then Kien is completely mad. Which is why *Auto-da-fé* (also splendidly translated) finally bores us, despite its long moments of sheer genius. Humankind cannot bear very much unreality.

Kien, the greatest living sinologist, begins as a superb creation. He inhabits a library of twenty-five thousand volumes and has walled up the windows so that there will be no temptation to watch what goes on in the street. "Books are worth more than men." Should he happen to hear a man speak three words of sense, he is amazed, until he reminds himself of all those thousands of words of nonsense which the same man speaks in the course of a day. The trouble is, Kien is so quickly created that there is nothing for him to do in the rest of this long work except to be knocked about by other people —and nothing to be done by these other people except to prove, prove and prove again the correctness of Kien's original contention that people are despicable or worse.

Kien belongs in a long short story. Such a story, in fact, as the one which occupies the first few pages of *Auto-da-fé*. People are bad. (Except for a few dead Chinese and Indian sages.) Books are good. (Except for the ones that are bad.) Kien reasons that children should be brought up in a good private library. "Daily conversation with none but serious minds, an atmosphere at once dim, hushed, and intellectual, a relentless training in the most careful ordering both of time and of space." Unfortunately, Kien is the only person in the town with a library of this sort, and he can't admit children because they make a noise and he is too busy, anyway. When a little boy who has astonished the sinologist by his devotion to books and his recognition of Chinese characters as such comes to the flat, on Kien's invitation, he is soundly cuffed both by Kien and by the grotesque old housekeeper Therese.

Kien is well paid out for this. Therese's apparent devotion to books moves him to marry her. And the rest is nightmare. At times irresistibly comic (as in the "conversations" between Kien, the cold clear thinker, and Therese, whose utterances consist largely of set ejaculations and lopped proverbs), at times compelling awe by the ingenuity of its insane logic, but too much of the time—and increasingly—gratuitously

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ferocious, a faked-up nightmare, the great Gothic machinery quite out of control.

Therese too is a splendid creation, until she is over-created. So is the dwarf, Fischerle, pick-pocket and pimp, with his dream of getting to America and becoming chess champion of the world. He swindles Kien, it is true, like everybody else, but at least he enters into Kien's dream world in order to do so; and he is certainly the nearest thing to a friend the sinologist finds among men. We wish him well towards the end, with his fantastic new clothes and his first-class ticket to Paris. But the author doesn't. Fischerle is murdered by one of his wife's customers, who then cuts his hump off with a blunt knife.

The intercourse between the denizens of this nightmare world is inventive, nimble, comic, convincing and fascinating. Their violence is heavy, contrived, repetitious and soon benumbing. Canetti's irony has to scream to make itself heard. Kien recognizes roses from their smell "which he knew from Persian love poetry." The shade of Confucius had seemingly encouraged Kien to marry his housekeeper: "To see the right and not to do it is to lack courage." As the long disaster approaches its end, the utterly mad sinologist (but was he less than utterly mad to begin with?) again invokes the sage. "Search through the sayings of Confucius ... search for a single sentence about women! You will find none!"

On its first appearance in English in 1946 the book was greeted with a fine bouquet of adjectives. "Eloquent"—but it keeps saying the same thing. "Subtle"—yes, Canetti creates an incredibly delicate piece of work, then puts the finishing touches with a sledge-hammer. "Mysterious"—a mystification, rather. "Powerful"—powerful indeed, but the power is undirected, it beats its dark wings in a void. At times the book is reminiscent of *Ulysses*, a *Ulysses* without Bloom or Stephen, a gratuitous, unrelated Nighttown of the Soul. When Kien finally burns himself along with his books, we are unmoved: it is merely so much paper changing into ash.

PERHAPS THE MESSAGE of *Confessions of Zeno* is that he who has the time and the talent to look at himself had better find the time and the talent to laugh at himself too. *Auto-da-fé* can't pass for an allegory of the free intellect crushed by brute force, for if Therese and the retired policeman Pfaff are symbols of "Nazi" brutishness, then Kien can only be symbolic of the totalitarian intellect. For instance, one species of book he can't tolerate is novels, for "they undermine the finest characters. They teach us to think ourselves into other men's places.... Novels should be prohibited by the State." One would rather suppose the message of *Auto-da-fé* to be that all women are vile beasts—except that, on its showing, all men are vile beasts too. With the possible exception of the greatest living sinologists. Who, in any case, are not human.

D. J. Enright

Electing Kennedy

The Making of the President, 1960. By THEODORE H. WHITE. *Cape*, 35s. net.

THE Presidential Election of 1960 had many features to fascinate the *aficionado* (or "buff," as the Americans put it). The popular majority or "plurality" of the winner was the narrowest since 1888 (where the winner hadn't got a popular plurality at all). The winner was the youngest man ever elected to the office; he was only the second serving senator in this century to be elected President (the other was Warren Gamaliel Harding, *absit omen*); he had never held any executive office except as a junior officer in the United States Navy where, it is true, his powers of leadership were severely tested and stood the test. And, most important, he was a Catholic. The winner in 1960 (whoever he was to be) would be succeeding the oldest man ever to serve in the White House and possibly the most popular man ever to do so, for if F. D. R.'s passionate admirers were legion, so were the Americans who hated and hate his guts. And without going into political controversy, it was certain that a new President would not be a President like General Eisenhower, not a Great White Father above the battle. He would have to be a politician, he would have to fight for his programme—and he would have to seem to have a programme. So in deciding in 1959 to prepare to write the history of the campaign, Mr. White was showing good judgment of the historical interest of the event he was going to chronicle. This was not to be a push-over like 1956; it was not to be a negative "confound their knavish tricks" election like 1952. It was not a set-up like 1948 when, as all competent observers knew, Harry Truman, game little man as he was, hadn't a better chance of survival than an iceberg in hell.

It was a campaign stabilised by the certainty that the Republican candidate would be Vice-President Nixon, for few politicians gave Governor Rockefeller a chance and there was no other plausible aspirant.

It was, of course, not certain that Senator Kennedy would be nominated, but it *was* possible, and that added to the interest of what

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would be, in any case, a fascinating case history, one that would answer questions like the alleged readiness of the American voter to go on electing a Republican President and a Democratic Congress. Mr. White was right. This was to be a real battle. Having made his decision, Mr. White did not wait till the formal opening of the campaign in the late winter and early spring of 1960. He began to contact leaders, managers, manipulators in all camps, so that when the first shots were fired, in the Wisconsin primary in March, Mr. White had already "cased the joint." Indeed, some of the most interesting parts of this fascinating, brilliant—and solid—book are to be found in the discussion of the local and national leaders, the impact of local as apart from national issues and personalities, the discussions of what the "pros" look for in a candidate. And thanks to Mr. White, we have a series of invaluable insights into the psychology of the American politician as well as not quite so valuable insights into the reactions of the mere voters.

Mr. White had studied the census returns for 1960 to great profit, although he does not note the interesting fact that the census was taken on the day of the Wisconsin primary. I remember this, because the Milwaukee hotel in which I was staying, issued a tactful notice to its guests, telling them that they must fill out the blanks but suggesting that there would be no rigorous investigation into the real identities of "Mr. and Mrs. John Smith."

As far as I can judge, Mr. White got the feel of the Wisconsin electorate very well, and he rightly stresses the ambiguous character of the Kennedy victory. For if in one way it was wonderful to defeat Hubert Humphrey (from the neighbouring state of Minnesota), in the heart of the old "Progressive" farm belt, it was not satisfactory to get a decisive victory only in the Catholic districts of the state. The account of Wisconsin's electoral history does not help adequately to explain this, for Mr. White does not make clear to the reader that Bob La Follette Junior was defeated in the Republican *primary* by Joe McCarthy. If he had not gone back to the Republicans, he might have got the Democratic nomination and beaten Joe. But to their annoyance, the Kennedy high command had to go into the traditionally hostile territory of West Virginia—and they had "to win big." (I can remember one of the very highest members of that high command complaining that people talked as if the Kennedy ticket hadn't *really* won in Wisconsin and implying it wouldn't be enough to win in West Virginia; Kennedy had to win big.)

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hero is not Senator Kennedy; it is Senator Humphrey, tired, broke, discarded by supporters who were really still "madly for Adlai." It was in West Virginia rather than in Wisconsin that the efficiency, the wealth, and the intelligence of the Kennedy machine was best exhibited—like the effectively "sellable" *persona* of the young Senator.

After West Virginia, it was a matter of combining to stop Kennedy. This is usually a desperate endeavour. It is risky to be the front runner; it is also risky not to be a runner till the front runner is well down the track. And in different ways, Mr. Stevenson, Senator Symington, and Senator Lyndon Johnson paid for being too cagey, playing hard to get. By the time the delegates got to the wildly unsuitable city of Los Angeles, the nomination was half in the bag. Mr. White rightly points out the handicaps imposed on the manœuvres of the politicos by the vast sprawl of L. A. It could cost a delegate $15 to take a taxi to conspire with an ally and most of the delegates went to Disneyland, leaving the centre of L. A. (if it has one) to itself. The emptiness of the streets through which the victorious Senator rode to accept the nomination was less a sign of tepidity in the delegates than a criticism of the original choice of the city of "Our Lady Queen of the Angels."

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Senator Kennedy got off to a bad start. His acceptance speech read better than it sounded and, like nearly all observers, Mr. White thinks that what put him back on the inside track was his showing in the first of the T.V. debates (miscalled "great," as Mr. White points out). I viewed the first debate in the Republican fastnesses of my New York club. It was a sight to see as the Democratic contender made rings round the Republican. The gloom reminded me of similar dripping caves as F. D. R. made a monkey of Alf Landon or Tom Dewey. By that debate, Senator Kennedy became a slightly odds-on favourite from having been an outsider. But—and it is a great mystery which even Mr. White cannot fully explain—Mr. Nixon did not get the immediate aid from President Eisenhower that he had a right to expect. When it was finally given, it was important, but too late. Like the Old Guard at Waterloo, the striking force of the Republicans was kept in reserve too long. (There was a great deal of speculation in Washington that Fall about the apparent tepidity of the White House. Whatever its causes, it was fatal.)

Yet Mr. Nixon nearly made it. Mr. White in part attributes this to lavish last minute expenditure on television as well as to the Eisenhower intervention. Maybe there was a swing backwards; maybe experts like Professor Austin Ranney are wrong in thinking that the peripeteias of the campaign matter less than the newspapermen, press agents, T.V. pontiffs, and the candidates themselves think. Possibly Senator Kennedy's bold intervention on behalf of Martin Luther King, the imprisoned Negro leader, did the trick. Certainly the Negro vote was massively for Senator Kennedy, and may have been decisive. Anyway, like Waterloo, it was a "damned close-run thing."

APART FROM TELLING a dramatic story, what else does Mr. White do for us? He does a great deal for future historians by catching, on the run, a great deal of the ephemeral news of the campaign, news that so rapidly gets lost. Mr. White is a master of what the Jesuits call "composition of place." You can feel how cold it was in northern Wisconsin; you can smell the corn-fed opulence of Iowa. I re-lived the campaign, and thousands of readers who weren't there will get from this book a vivid and basically just picture of what a presidential election, especially a closely-contested one, is like. They will also get an idea of the importance of the election in dramatising the rise to power and respectability of the newer "ethnic" groups, *"les nouvelles couches"* of the new American society. It is not only the white groups, from the Irish down, who have benefited from this rise. The Negroes

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have done so too. It is less important that Kennedy carried South Carolina by only 10,000 than that majority was given him by the support he got from the 40,000 Negroes who, it is believed, voted for him in that backward state. That 40,000 Negroes should vote in South Carolina at all is the miracle.

Excellent as this book is, it has a few faults. Mr. White is too prone to use historical shorthand. Thus in a bravura piece about the historical image of the Republican Party, he assumes that the McCormicks were Republicans in 1860 in the year that the new party nominated and elected Lincoln. But the founder of the dynasty, Cyrus McCormick, was a rabid Democrat, and later during "the War" was suspected of being a Copperhead. It was the Medills who supplied the Republican pedigree of Colonel Robert Rutherford McCormick. And one is horrified to learn that Mr. Stevenson believed that "he was the first Illinoisian to be considered for the Presidency since Abraham Lincoln." Lincoln's first successor, as an elected President, was U. S. Grant of Galena, Illinois. Other errors, minor and not so minor, could be pointed out. The Germans were overwhelmingly Democratic until the Kansas-Nebraska split, and the great Senator Hoare of Massachusetts was George Frisbie not Richard. But he is quoted much to the purpose, revealing the Yankee dislike of the new Irish immigrant politicians like Mr. Kennedy's grandfather. In that dislike, surviving into a day when it is likely to be dangerously expensive, lies the secret of why Mr. Nixon did so well in traditionally Democratic states—like West Virginia.

And it is not merely a matter of recent immigrant stocks getting above themselves. The Kennedys are no more a recent immigrant stock than were the families of Woodrow Wilson and Charles Evans Hughes. But they were *and* remained Catholics. In a possibly unconscious memory of the famous opening passage of *The Education of Henry Adams*, Mr. White writes:

> If Joseph P. Kennedy had become an apostate Catholic and baptised his son at birth in Trinity Church in Copley Square, Boston, John F. Kennedy would, nonetheless, have had to run against the same sense of the past and the same unease that the American people felt when they considered putting their destiny into new hands.

They were only deemed to be new hands because they were Catholic hands. If the Kennedys had "passed," their origins (given their physical and mental talents) would have been forgiven or, better still, forgotten. Of course, if they had *"passed,"* Senator Kennedy wouldn't have carried Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, etc., and wouldn't be President.

D. W. Brogan

Georgian Poets

Georgian Poetry. Selected and introduced by James Reeves. *The Penguin Poets*, 3s. 6d.

"I do not claim," writes Mr. Reeves, "to have looked at the Georgians with any eye but that of 1960." This anthology, in other words, is not meant to give us the most typical or representative Georgian poems, or those which were most popular in the decade of Edward Marsh's anthologies. Mr. Reeves has chosen from that large mass of material the poems which he thinks will be most acceptable to us, because they have been most acceptable to him. This is a reasonable principle of choice —indeed the only one which is not intolerably patronising. We cannot make any ultimate judgment about which Georgian poems have the capacity to survive our own age. But an anthologist can, and must, say that this poem and this one seem to have kept their value for *him, now.*

Keeping this in view—the constant but easily forgotten limitations on our judgment—what can one—what can *I*—make of the Georgian verse which Mr. Reeves believes to be best-suited to my taste? To begin with I would say that Mr. Reeves is largely right in his guess: these are, by and large, the kind of poems which I myself would have chosen from the Georgian anthologies. I believe that most editors of our own time would have made a roughly similar choice, and that this volume represents a just estimate of how the main body of contemporary opinion would operate in this field. The preference is for W. H. Davies (22 poems), de la Mare (17), Blunden (15), Wilfred Owen (12), Graves (12), Sassoon (9), Andrew Young (8) and Edward Thomas (8). If there is any surprise here it does not lie in the names but in the figures after them. Before the reminder of this volume I would have been inclined to give Davies far less space. After reading the book I would still have given more space to Edward Thomas, though not, by now, at the expense of Davies.

But I ought to begin at an earlier stage than this. I ought to begin by saying that to read this anthology has been a surprisingly pleasant, even exciting experience. I suppose I had read no Georgian verse in bulk for nearly thirty years, though from the ages of thirteen to seventeen I probably read no other kind at all. At the right age, though at least a decade behind the times, I made the conventional change of horses; and if that sounds patronising and offensive towards my eighteen-year-old predecessor I certainly mean to be neither. If I could recapture the violence and splendour of his emotions on first reading *The Waste Land* I might be able to write a poem like Keats' tribute to Chapman

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and Homer. What I had vaguely felt for Brooke, Drinkwater, Shanks, and Turner was nothing at all compared to the new feelings aroused by Eliot and Pound, Auden and Spender. I didn't change horses because it was fashionable to do so—even if the change *did* provide me with a new and pleasant instrument against my parents; I changed because the new, though unintelligible, was full of meaning, while the old, though easy to understand, had ceased to have any meaning at all.

But my boy's taste had been, of course, for the most obvious and most anthologised of Georgian verse; and it is exactly this kind of verse which has made no vestige of a return, which remains as dead, indeed rotten, as we believed it to be thirty years ago. Under the pressure of the name Mr. Reeves has included eight poems by Rupert Brooke in this anthology: *The Soldier* deserves to be there for its rhetoric, but the others seem dreadfully affected and corrupt. Nor can I find much to say for the verse included here by Flecker, Squire, Sorley, Stephens, or Hodgson. Indeed I could, if that were the point, find all the old things to say against them. A verse from Stephens' *The Cherry Tree* will serve as a reminder of what we still find intolerable about this period:

> *For he has climbed the height these times ago,*
> *He laughed among the hills and they were glad;*
> *With bubbled pearls he set the stream aglow*
> *And laced the hedge with silver; and he clad*
> *The lawn in pomp of green, and white, and gold;*
> *And bade the world forget it had been sad.*

What have those lines in common with these ones by Edward Thomas?

> *It seems I have no tears left. They should have fallen—*
> *Their ghosts, if tears have ghosts, did fall—that day*
> *When twenty hounds streamed by me, not yet combed out*
> *But still all equals in their rage of gladness*
> *Upon the scent, made one, like a great dragon*
> *In Blooming Meadow that bends towards the sun*
> *And once bore hops.*

The answer, surely, is that they have as much in common as the worst of Crashaw has with the best of Herbert, or as the worst of those dry little stutters in the weekly press have in common with the best modern poems by Ted Hughes or Thom Gunn. It is not always given to a period to recognise its own best poets—we may be wrong about Mr. Hughes and Mr. Gunn; few poets or critics of the 'Nineties recognised the pre-eminence of Yeats. And if we look at the whole body of Georgian verse in this light then it will seem *to us* that though all these poets had about as much in common as contemporary poets are likely to have, there was little apprecia-

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tion at the time of which poets were better at the recognised common job.

I take it that the most obvious of the recognised common jobs was to write with personal and individual passion about natural scenes and objects. If all poetical movements involve a return, then the Georgians were trying to return, beyond Swinburne, Tennyson and Browning, to Wordsworth. (At any rate those who returned, by accident or design, to Keats or Shelley, fared much worse than the Wordsworthians.) With all the changes of a century, Thomas is a Wordsworthian: so are Davies, and Blunden and that excellent survivor, Andrew Young. And these are the four truly Georgian poets whose verse of that period has best survived.

Another way of putting it, looking forward rather than back, is to see how much of the best verse in this collection seems to be "aspiring to the condition" *either* of Yeats *or* of Frost. (Not even Graves seems to be aspiring to the condition of Graves.) The honourable flatness of Thomas, rising occasionally to such magnificent flights as in the fourth and fifth lines I have quoted, is obviously very close to the verse of his friend, Robert Frost. And if one could add a few more feathers to the bright pinions of W. H. Davies one can imagine him soaring in the same quarter of the sky as the later Yeats.

I think it was a mistake on the part of Mr. Reeves to include the war poetry of Sassoon, Graves, Blunden, and Owen. Technically these were Georgian poems, in the accepted sense that they appeared in the Edward Marsh collections. But so did Lawrence, and Mr. Reeves has quite rightly decided that *he* doesn't belong in this company. If a war poem was to be included, in addition to the proper and inevitable "If I should die...", then surely the perfectly appropriate one is Julian Grenfell's *Into Battle*. Nothing could better express the moment when the Georgian poet first confronted modern war.

To me the major disappointment of this volume is the much-esteemed de la Mare. As he is represented here—no doubt quite fairly—he is not the marvellous explorer of the dream whom I remember—but a rather mannered poseur. And for the rest there are five, slightly odd, choices from Housman, to whom I would have allotted more though many of my contemporaries would have excluded him altogether; and there is this revelation, to me, of the dry and witty eloquence of Davies. A rewarding book, which shows us that the decade from 1912 to 1922 produced a reasonable body of admirable and admired verse. As admirable as 1922 to 1932 could show? I think not. As 1932 to 1942? I think not. As 1942 to 1952? I think so. As 1952 to 1962? I don't know.

Philip Toynbee

Mary, Quite Contrary

On the Contrary. By MARY MCCARTHY. New York: *Farrar, Straus & Cudahy*, $4.50. *London: Heinemann*, 30s.

"WHAT IS MISSING," Miss McCarthy writes, "is a certain largeness of mind, an amplitude of style, the mantle of a calling, a sense of historical dignity." She is comparing with regret the Vassar of to-day with the college, "where in my day the roadster, the trolley car, and the taxi bore us off the campus and away from the supervisory eye—downtown in groups to a speakeasy, or off with our dates to a roadhouse or a picturesque old inn." Now a different atmosphere reigns—"to-day's undergraduates flock up the hill to Alumnae House for beer, cokes... in the pub on week nights; and on weekends, they join their young men in the big lounge-living room for a cocktail or two, under the watchful eyes of the alumnae secretary or her assistants, who see that the young men do not get too much to drink, that there is no necking," and so on. "There is none of the conflict and indecision that harried us in the 'thirties," she says. "They [the present-day Vassar girls] have decided to help the world, but not to change or to destroy it." The note of distaste for the new conformists is not unusual in Miss McCarthy's generation. The essay was published first in 1951, perhaps she might modify it now. But not, I imagine, very greatly, for these essays collected here from all fields—politics, society, the arts—lament a purer age.

In the same essay she recalls the splendid women teachers of her day—"I think of old Miss Haight, Elizabeth Hazelton Haight, of the Latin Department... with a stately classroom delivery: her romantic attachment to Horace and Appuleius, her Augustan lecture style." There perhaps we have it—the vanished Augustan age, splendid and civilised, yet with the ruder courage of the Republican times not yet forgotten; where the pastoral and the bucolic could still survive; where personal greatness and a sense of *pietas* had not vanished; Florence rather than Venice; the citizens meeting in the market place still faintly to be traced beneath the vast machinery of government that has replaced them.

Of course, it is only a fiction by which Miss McCarthy suggests that this sterner, finer age has even existed within her memory, though, in all things, even in the bad, she sees great decline. *Vogue* in her youth was vulgar; now with *Harper's Bazaar* it has felt the need to go beyond society people, to democratise a little by appealing to culture-snobbery for the middle

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classes. Now we are getting Capote and McCullers and Bowles and Welty—but known to the gossip recorders as Truman and Carson and Paul and Eudora. Miss McCarthy leaves us in no doubt of what she thinks either of a democratic process that does this to the arts, or of artists (her Republican soul revolts from the "decadents") who lend themselves to this treatment. A culminating point has been reached in *Flair* (now defunct; the essay was written in 1950) "with its first-naming of the New Bohemians, 'Carson,' 'Truman,' and 'Tennessee,' and its splashy collage of democrats and decadents—Margaret Mead and Salvador Dali . . . Thomas Jefferson and Angus Wilson," etc. But popular taste is only a symptom of the vulgarity and decay of the age. The real rot has set in in high places: in literary criticism we have Mr. Anthony West, "the first, so far as I know, to pretend that Dickens' art was a calculated untruth aimed to swell the volume of the sales"; in the political sphere, as indeed in the sphere of personal sexual freedom, "the ideas circulate, the individual holding them may be jailed." It is a woman faculty member of a well-known American university who announced to Miss McCarthy's horror—"Well, did you hear? They got the Mahatma." Beside such empty inability to confront the destruction of human goodness, the anti-Semitic Colonel with whom Miss McCarthy argues in another essay seems a simple and old-fashioned villain. Indeed, it is in some degree by her own ineffectualness as an intellectual confronting the Colonel's coarse prejudice that Miss McCarthy is shocked rather than by the Colonel himself. Demagoguery has taken over, but not a little of the sordid situation is due to a *trahison des clercs*.

In part, of course, this anger of Miss McCarthy's is touched by intellectual arrogance. If the intellectuals have let the world down, it is because of the insufficient quality of their intellect, above all of their intellectual perseverance. If they seem dishonest or second-rate Miss McCarthy suggests that this may just be a lack of courage, an inability to go on thinking when the process becomes difficult or painful. Miss McCarthy is always stoic and she finds as she expects that intellectual flabbiness soon produces moral cowardice, above all produces vacuity. Like most of her group her hero-worship centres upon Trotsky. It is an estimable admiration, and if English intellectuals never completely participated in the stirring atmosphere of the Trotsky Defence Committee, they may plead absorption in the Hitler War. But they are mistaken if they suppose that they are not losers by not knowing the New York cult Miss McCarthy knew. For one thing American intellectuals were the sooner rid of those illusions about Stalin which even George Orwell's work only painfully dissipated here a decade later. There is, of course, a sentimental quality in all Miss McCarthy's reverence for "the old man" in Mexico. He was greater than his peers but he was much more unpleasant than most of the old left American intellectuals are willing to admit. But his murder is a good symbol for the defeat of personality, a current phenomenon which Miss McCarthy inclines to think means the death of the novel. If she makes any exceptions in her strictures on modern fiction it is for Faulkner, another grand old man in hiding.

THERE ARE TIMES, it must be said, when this high-mindedness, this intellectual exclusivism of Miss McCarthy's can madden. So, all right, pretty well all the creative writers and the sociologists (except, of course, Miss Hannah Arendt) and theatre people and the literary critics (except a few New York buddies) are no good; and the trouble about mass society is not so much its own vulgarity but the fact that it accepts such phonies as artistic and intellectual gods. There is much to be said for this view as there is for the dogmatic comminations of Dr. Leavis (a very kindred soul to Miss McCarthy). But Dr. Leavis has been wise enough to confine himself to literary criticism. Miss McCarthy has laid herself too open to counter-attack. She has written novels and they are not very good. She engages in general journalism and often (as in the essays on Portugal included in this volume) she is dull. She can be silly in the paradoxes that she produces to knock the debased world on the head. There are aspects of American material civilisation that are poor, but to write "the virtue of American civilisation is that it is unmaterialistic" is to be unfair to the achievements of the United States in a rather prissy sort of way.

But then I immediately think of the extraordinary achievement of her autobiography, the real sense she shows there for the mystery of human personality, the hatred she must feel for any civilisation that ignores or contemns that mystery. Her whole work, one reflects, is a self-discovery, using herself as a means of divining the mystery of human beings and, particularly, of the United States. For she is in love, I think, with her own country in a fierce, vituperative love affair. It is her tragedy and that of most of the top New York intellectuals that they care so passionately for America, and, in the long run, America, by so completely ignoring them, makes them seem less than they are, makes them seem often precious, even more often provincial.

Angus Wilson

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

Letter from Prague

CZECHOSLOVAKIA is the most "western" of the Soviet bloc countries. not only geographically (one sometimes forgets that Prague is closer to London than Vienna is), but in its traditions and way of life. Industrially, it is the most advanced, and its capital the most comfortable to live in. That faint aroma of Byzantium-cum-Turkey which still hangs about Budapest—or the Eastern quality a visitor occasionally senses in Warsaw—is totally absent in Prague. The prevailing atmosphere is one of business men, tramways, and Swiss decorum. Were it not for the architectural beauty of Prague, an Englishman might easily suppose he was in Birmingham.

Yet it is, at the same time, the "most Communist" of the East European states. It was the first of the satellites to proclaim itself "a socialist republic," and it has satisfied the dogmatic conditions of Marxism more fully than any other country except Russia. All means of production and distribution have been nationalised, agriculture almost completely "socialised," and the cultural life and education brought under the control of the Party. The peaceful transition of this once developed "capitalist" country to socialism is, it is claimed, a model for what will one day happen in the industrially advanced Western countries.

How has this come about—among a people who have been described as the "Swiss of Eastern Europe"? It is partly due to the age-old hatred of a Slavonic people for the Germans who surround them on all sides; partly, to an apathy in political matters which has appeared since the Munich agreement of 1938. "Yes, we are a Western people," I was often told, "and all our sympathies lie with you. But look what you did to us at Munich. And Munich led to Lidice." The failure of the West to do anything at the time of the Hungarian Revolution also increased this disillusion. "We are now a race of *Schweiks*," one man said to me bitterly. "Cynical *Schweiks*, who don't believe in anything." And to-day the average Czech shrugs his shoulders as he looks up at the huge Stalin monument which dominates his city and says, "Why bother to demolish it? It's ugly, it's quite out of place in our beautiful baroque city. But—it'll cost a lot of money to remove it. Let the beastly thing stand."

MR. ANTHONY RHODES *has often visited Eastern Europe for* ENCOUNTER*; his most recent article ("Letter from Budapest," November 1961) aroused widespread attention—and much controversy within Hungary itself.*

As it weighs over one thousand tons one sees his point. (A British firm has recently put in a tender to remove it.) And this hard-headed or cynical approach is typical of the Czechs, who have not even bothered to re-christen the streets which bear Stalin's name in Prague. A committee of prominent men was formed last November, at the time of Khrushchev's speech to the XXII Congress in Russia, to decide what to do with the Stalin statue; but they have decided nothing. It seems that the canny Czechs are waiting to see if there are further changes in Russia, if perhaps Stalin may not come back into fashion again.[1]

LIKE THE BRITISH, they can well be called a "nation of shop-keepers," and it is in commerce that the clearest signs of "de-Stalinisation" are to be seen. Commercial contacts of all kinds with the West are increasing in a way that would have been unthinkable five years ago. The old type of idealist revolutionary leaders is disappearing, and the present leaders are largely technicians and *apparatchiks*, less concerned with revolution than with trade, motor cars, and houses.[2]

If there is one British trade organisation which, as the epitome of capitalism, should surely be anathema to every good Communist, it is the Federation of British Industries. Yet the head of its Asian department, Mr. E. S. Taylor, was recently in Prague where he was extremely well received. The paper *Svobodne Slovo* reports him on the 16th February 1962 as speaking of "the ever growing interest of British industrialists in the Czechoslovak markets." He said that last year Czechoslovak exports to Great Britain were worth £13·6 million and imports from Great Britain £10·1 million—whereas in 1955 the relative figures were £4·3 million and £2·8 million. The same can be said for trade with France, Italy, and W. Germany (the

[1] A novel about this statue, *Le Monument* by Elsa Triolet, the wife of the French poet Aragon, was published in 1957 (Gallimard). It is a portrait of a disillusioned Communist idealist, the sculptor Svec, who was so ashamed of making this statue that he committed suicide.

[2] The Czech Communist Party leadership is to-day composed, broadly, of three groups, whose individual images are now emerging clearly. The oldest is composed of Gottwald followers, with a more or less Stalinist past. Some of the better known leaders in this group are Politbureau members, Bacilek, Kopecky, Siroky, etc.

The second group which is now quickly gaining influence in the top party apparatus is that of the "technocrats," composed of party members who have thorough training and experience gained in all fields of national activity since 1948. The outstanding member of this group is Simunaek, a member of the Politbureau, Deputy Premier and Chairman of the State Planning Commission.

However, the most important group in the Czechoslovak party leadership to-day is that of the *"apparatchiks"* composed of men, including the present ruler of the country, President Novotny, who have made their careers inside the existing party bureaucracy.

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last a country which does not recognise Czechoslovakia officially. Yet it has the highest Western trade of all with her.)

While I was in Prague a weekly Czech air service between Prague and Cuba opened up, *using British aeroplanes* (Bristol Britannias)! This purchase of "monopoly-capitalist" machines instead of the perfectly good Russian ones, is explained in a most common-sense manner. The Communists are anxious to establish a direct air link between East Europe and Cuba, and British planes can be more easily serviced and supplied with spare parts at Shannon, Newfoundland, and other stopping places on the Atlantic route. As one newspaper put it cynically, *"Cuba vaut une messe."*

All these transactions with the West, with their overtones of hypocrisy (on both sides), reveal how the contest between East and West is gradually becoming, as Khrushchev intends, a commercial one. At the same time they throw a curious light on Lenin's famous remark about "monopoly-capitalism"—"it would sell the rope with which it is to be hanged." It is now far from clear who is hanging whom—or who is selling rope to whom.

THAT THIS TRADE with the West is carefully planned, and is only a practical short-term measure, is revealed in many public speeches. Mr. Karol Hulman is reported (in the Bratislava *Pravda*, 6 February, 1962) as saying: "Our aim is to increase trade relations with the socialist countries. The more they develop, the less dependent will Czechoslovakia be on deliveries from capitalist countries, and the sooner the time will come when the world socialist system will overtake in the total volume of production not only the capitalist camp, but the most advanced capitalist countries in the total production per head of the population. . . ." The implication is, in fact, that the "socialist world" needs the capitalist world at present, and is prepared to use it.

Another example of Czech trading with the West is *Tusex*, a firm which no other satellite has been clever enough to invent. *Tusex* is a set of shops where the Czechs can buy anything they like—from motor cars to fur coats and food—at a quarter of the ordinary price, *provided they pay in Western currency*. They can also have the goods immediately, instead of waiting—as they must in the case of a motor car—two or three years. A motor car at *Tusex* costs ten thousand kronin, instead of the usual forty thousand kronin. A bottle of whisky in the shops costs three hundred kronin; at *Tusex* you buy it for seventy kronin. The only way a Czech can obtain the necessary Western currency is from friends and relations abroad. There is no better way for a Westerner to help a friend: and millions of dollars pour in annually. A *Tusex* voucher is a treasured possession, and some Czech employees at Western embassies accept them as a part of their salary, at lower rates.

The Western business men who come in increasing numbers to Prague say that, efficient as the Czechs may be individually, the Communist system by its very nature still causes much delay in negotiations. They have to go through the Trade Ministry rather than work directly with the firm or factory concerned. An English business man who was selling a special kind of paper for illustrated magazines told me that he wasted hours explaining technicalities to bureaucrats who then had to transmit them, frequently in garbled form, to the factory. But the Czechs are aware of this inefficiency, and they are doing what they can to remedy it.

The undoubted business abilities of the Czechs also play an increasing part in relations between the Communist world and the uncommitted countries. These small nations often prefer to deal with Czechoslovakia than with Russia, of whom they are apprehensive. Everything from diesel engines for Iraq to fezzes for Nigeria are now exported by Czechoslovakia to the uncommitted world. *Rude Pravo* reports (14 February, 1962): "Nigeria is now taking 400,000 fezzes annually. Not a single complaint about our fezzes has been received."

There are plenty of passages like the following in the press (*Svot V Obrazech*, 27 January): "Four officials from the State Institute for the design of dams and reservoirs went to Ghana last year to explore the river basins in south-west Ghana. Thereafter they drew up plans for the construction of dams and power stations. The delegation learnt from both ordinary Ghanaians and from President Nkrumah that Czechoslovakia enjoys a good reputation in the country." Or: "Eight Cuban experts have begun their training period in the *Mlada Boleslav* car works. On their return to Cuba they will supervise the assembly of Czechoslovak *Skoda* cars there." (*Rude Pravo*, 10 February.)

Cuba clearly has to be supported by the "socialist camp," and here again it seems that Czechoslovakia bears the principal burden. Some Czechs even complain that so much heavy industry (Czechoslovakia is one of the biggest machine tool producers in the world[3]), has gone to Cuba in the past four years that they have become a big creditor nation to Cuba. "And what do we get back?" one man said to me scornfully. "Havana cigars!" (The visitor to Prague is soon aware of this. In every small tobacco booth he can buy the best cigars in the world for the price of a few cigarettes.)

Officials of the trade ministry admit that Czechoslovakia has exported a great deal of this machinery to the uncommitted nations, some of whom have not yet paid for it. But they insist that this is a purely business transaction. "It is Trade—not Aid," one of them said. "We are too poor to allow ourselves the luxury of offering Aid to less prosperous lands. We shall be paid back as soon as the factories we have set up abroad are producing."

ONE MAY legitimately question this. Just as the distinction between political and economic motives

[3] The West's embargo on strategic goods in the early days of the cold war here became a double-edged weapon. Withholding precision instruments from the Communist lands forced the Czechs to develop them—to such an extent that they are, to-day actually exporting them to Britain and France.

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in all Communist commercial dealings is an extremely narrow one, so the distinction between "Trade" and "Aid" to the uncommitted nations can barely be defined. Trade between Czechoslovakia and the world's uncommitted nations became prominent in 1954, when Asia was the market. In 1956 a switch occurred, the main market becoming at first Latin America and later Africa. The Czechoslovak economic offensive in these areas has always been closely tied to "political infiltration," the long-term credits being accompanied by the despatch of instructors, and the acceptance of students from the countries concerned at Czechoslovak institutes of higher learning.

THE CZECHS have long been among the greatest puppeteers in the world, and in Jari Trnka they possess a genius. He is now making quantities of films of the Walt Disney variety specially for America (many of which are never shown on the Czech screen). They are produced at about a third of the Hollywood price, and are generally admitted to be superior. (His recent Mid-*summer Night's Dream* had a great success in America.)

Trnka is one of the most popular men in the land, and he can do and say pretty much as he likes. He is a humanist who recently produced a puppet film on the lines of E. M. Forster's *The Machine Stops*, a satire on the automation of life in the atomic age. It tells of a little girl who reaches the moon on a rocket equipped with every kind of mechanical gadget. But she finds that the most infallible automata do not replace frail human beings. Trnka is said to have had some difficulty in showing this film—for not only are rockets (Russian ones) much admired in official circles to-day, but the Czech Government is trying to make the people "automation conscious."[4]

In criticising automation, Trnka is certainly treading on delicate ground. For Czech industry, although in advance of that in the other Communist states, is going through a difficult period. The expanding exports she is called upon to supply to the rest of the world as the "economic spearhead" of Communism (not to mention the huge industrial programme being undertaken in what was once backward Slovakia) demands an increased labour force. But this is not available, for every hand is employed. Agriculture is already in a bad enough way and no more men can be taken off the land,[5] so it is to automation that they are turning. One thousand five hundred electrical computers are already operating in the factories throughout the country, and many more are being constructed. The Government are convinced that this is the only way they can solve the man-power shortage.

THE CONSUMER-GOODS situation has improved considerably in the last five years, and the Prague shops are full of goods, not of Western quality (but then, the Government openly states it has no intention of turning out "luxury products"). Prices are high (a pair of shoes, for instance, costs 150 kronin—£4 at the tourist rate, or £8 at the official rate), and there are still irritating deficiencies. At one point last year it was impossible to buy a coat-hanger in Prague—then there was the lavatory paper shortage. Both were due less to lack of the goods than to poor distribution.

As in all countries with a Communist economic system, distribution is the biggest problem—particularly in agriculture. It is just possible that a Ministry may be able to forecast how many steel tubes it will be producing in two years' time. It cannot say the same thing for apples or grain, for the weather is still God-given. The small greengrocer in a capitalist state knows his market, and exactly how much to order in a certain month. But when deliveries of perishable goods are planned (as they are in Communist countries) on an almost national scale, the most extraordinary situations occur. One day, it will be impossible to find a cauliflower or a cabbage in a certain town; while there will be a glut of them in a town ten miles away. This was the main reason for the queues outside the food shops to be seen all over Prague during my visit. Last December there was not a turkey to be found in Prague, and everyone was wondering if they would have their Christmas dinner. Then suddenly, on the 24th December, turkeys appeared in quantities and everyone rushed out to the shops to buy them. (Rationing to prevent these queues is not contemplated, because "it would give the capitalist world an opportunity for propaganda.")

THAT THIS DISTRIBUTION of agricultural goods is the main problem in Czech economy is confirmed regularly in the Czech press. *Zemedelske Noviny* reports (14 February): "The results of deliveries of animal produce in the first ten days of February are unsatisfactory in nearly all regions. Not a single task was fulfilled on the national scale. Meat deliveries were fulfilled on the national scale by 88·6 per cent, milk deliveries by only 97·3 per cent, and the delivery of eggs was not fulfilled by a single region...." Mr. Frantisek Konvil says in *Rude Pravo* (4 February), somewhat euphemistically, "Although all shortcomings in industry which were not removed last year slowed down the development of our economy, the greatest difficulties

[4] The film *was* shown—for this formidable dollar-earner generally gets his own way. It is said that if Trnka wants a new Mercedes he simply goes to the Minister of Finance, who has to give it to him immediately. Such stories should be treated with reserve; but they are "true" in that they reveal the power and immunity from governmental interference which certain popular figures outside the Party now possess. They could not have enjoyed this in Stalin's day.

[5] In his recent speech to the Central Committee (6 February, 1962), Mr. Hendrych, a member of the Politbureau, said: "We have to bear in mind that in the process of constructing socialism, industry has grown and the number of those engaged in agriculture dropped between 1948 and 1961 by some 800,000." This is a huge figure in a population of 12 million.

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were caused by insufficient deliveries of some agricultural areas."[6]

In an attempt to remedy this, the Party has embarked on a drive to "conquer the countryside." It has sent thousands of Party members to leading posts in kolchozes, and to local national committees, mainly as their secretaries. There are now, in some small villages, up to five salaried party *apparatchiks*. But it has not been a success. Novotny, the President of Czechoslovakia, complained in March 1961 that their work is "unsatisfactory" and that a number of them have become "mere bureaucrats." What seems to have happened is that many of them have adapted themselves to the prevailing attitude in the village, one of general distaste for working in co-operatives.

IN THE literary and artistic world there has been some "relaxation" in the last five years, and books and plays are allowed which criticise certain aspects of the system (but not, of course, the system itself). Indeed, officialdom claims that it welcomes such criticism.

The more liberal attitude emerged after the Soviet Party Congress in 1956. And at the Congress of the Union of Czechoslovak writers in April 1956, many speakers demanded "more freedom" for the artists and denied the Party's right to "interfere" with literature. A more tolerant attitude was also taken towards Western literature. For the first time since 1948, there were translations of Greene, Hemingway, Wilder, Moravia, and many other contemporary Western authors.[7]

Yet among original Czech and Slovak works, the movement away from the Zhdanov line and compulsory socialist realism was much less apparent. The reasons for this lay partly, I suspect, with the writers themselves. Firstly, they felt bewildered and lost in the new atmosphere and were not sure how far they could go. Secondly, they were at a loss as artists. Everything had been prescribed for —themes, ideological attitude, mode of expression. Now they are left to their own devices. The only condition still imposed is that they shall remain loyal to the Marxist-Leninist outlook and depict the socialist world around them.

Their themes are new, hitherto neglected or passed over in silence. Material, psychological, and moral problems are again treated in novels and short stories. A new kind of hero has appeared. In the past the stock hero used to be a "positive" type, usually a Communist, overcoming all difficulty and triumphing in the end. The literary weekly *Literarni Noviny* summed it up admirably:

> Ten years ago cautious people worked out a theory of non-existence of conflicts. Socialist society became a kind of angelic garden. We can still remember novels of this period, in which the development rushed from the first line to the happy end, thanks to the ideal hero who, with the greatest ease, overcame all obstacles put in his path by the author. The hero was lucky because the obstacles which the author had placed there were always very low—he hardly needed to jump them. The outcome was clear from the beginning, and the hero went through life without any difficulty.

In the theatre, too, this is to be seen. *A Too Generous Christmas Eve* by the playwright Blazek has a strong element of satire on "how to get your son on in life," *i.e.*, he must join the Party, read all the Party newspapers, repeat the Party clichés. Plays like *The Novel and I* by Ptacnik and *They Call Me Comrade* by Kohout also criticise abuses fairly openly (although the last-named play about a corrupt old Communist leader was taken off after two weeks: it probably went too far). It should not be supposed that any of these writers are against the régime, in the sense that the Hungarian writers were in 1956. Many of them are Party members or if not, pro-Communist. In Hungary, I did not find it difficult last autumn to meet writers who expressed their hostility to the system; but apparently no such person exists in Czechoslovakia (or if he does, he keeps quiet in front of Westerners).[8]

Norbert Fryd's interesting novel, *The Living Statue*, is a very human story about the wife of a Communist guard killed in some frontier incident. He is turned into a hero—for his vigilance against capitalist agents—and a statue is to be erected to him. His wife cares little about the statue, and points out that all the panoply of heroism and Communist greatness cannot compensate for the fact that a human being is dead.

CRITICISM OF THE OTHER socialist countries is also to be found. No one until recently would have dreamt of implying, let alone stating openly, that the East Germans are still, after all, Germans. The official view is that the East Germans have now seen the light and are respectable people. But Miss Hela Volanska in *Kvet Paprade*, a set of short stories and reports about her travels in East Germany, says virtually, "A German is still a German whether he is under Adenauer or Ulbricht." With ingenious dialogue and conversation, revealing the East Germans' love of *Uniform und Pflicht*, she expresses a feeling that is deep in the hearts of all Czechs.[9]

A favourite theme is that of the young teddy-boy type trying, often unsuccessfully, to find his place in society. Jaroslava Blazkov's *The Nylon Moon* is a new phenomenon in Slovak literature, and she

[6] Czechoslovakia has always been a relatively poor agricultural country, and still imports one fifth of her food.

[7] Czechoslovakia publishes, according to U.N.E.S.C.O. figures, more translations than any other country except Russia and Germany. About half of them, I was told, are now Western books.

[8] As in Hungary since 1956, it is now perfectly possible in Czechoslovakia for writers, playwrights etc. to make a living without belonging to the Party. Indeed, it is often looked on as most suspicious if a writer suddenly wishes to join.

[9] Her book will not, of course, be published in East Germany (where her other books have all been published), and there had been some question of whether it would be in Prague. But it has been, and is now to be seen on all the bookstalls.

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is often described as "the Czechoslovak Sagan." The problem of finding a place in which to make love, and emotional problems with parents, are probably responsible for this definition.

All the main figures in the prose written since 1956 are more complex, more human, and less "positive." Several authors, such as the Slovak novelist Alfonz Bednar, even began portraying people who were not heroes at all, but cowards and opportunists. As soon as it was established that books with such a different approach could be published, more and more authors took courage and followed this trend, which has many similarities with the early French Existentialism or the original works of England's "Angry Young Men."

This does not mean that the Party has not watched the development closely. The Conference of the Writers' Union in March 1959 became a platform for a frontal attack by the régime against this form of more liberal writing. The rector of the Central Committee Institute of Social Sciences, Ladislav Stoll, called for a change in the dangerous attitude:

> Ideas have been formulated, no matter whether openly or in hidden form under the cloak of Marxist terminology, advocating a return back by way of liberalisation to the liquidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the restoration of capitalist literature.

The Secretary of the Party, Jiri Hendrych, uttered a solemn warning to those unwilling to return to Party-inspired and directed literature:

> If you do not want to go with us, get out of our way, do not hinder the creative effort of our people. We shall not tolerate double-faced people in our society, and especially not in our culture.

THE IMMEDIATE RESULT was that the two literary periodicals which were the mouthpieces of non-conformist youth, *Kveten* and *Novy Zivot*, were ordered to close down. For a time it seemed that the liberalising attempts were thwarted, and that this had been a period of false thaw. Yet it was not so. Even if the advocates of liberalisation became less outspoken, and the number of works of the new trend diminished, the "positive" hero has not returned. Indeed, the new literary review *Plamen*, which replaced the two suppressed ones, began to acquire, after a few colourless numbers, a definitely new and interesting character. It is, however, improbable that the Czechoslovak writers, shouted down by the Party officials in 1959, would have dared to defend their right to experiment without the new impetus provided by the Twenty-Second Congress of the Soviet Party last October.

One feature of this new trend in Czechoslovak writing deserves special mention. In Soviet Russia, together with the older writers like Pasternak, Ehrenburg, and Tvardovsky, it was largely members of the younger generation who initiated and carried out "the thaw." In Czechoslovakia it is the same; the works which depart from the old pattern are written mostly by the young (and often by the very young). As in the West, these young Communist writers speak of "the Establishment" (*i.e.*, the Communist régime) as "them." The following quotation from a short story by Jiri Trefulka entitled *"It Rained Happiness,"* illustrates this:

> We say that we are building the most just society and that our greatest weapon is truth, but where is truth when, for instance, pledges are made which everybody knows to be phoney? My father joined those who imagine that the achievement of revolutionary ideas is a sort of hawking between theory and practice. Dammit, this is petty bourgeois, for instance, this dainty doily on the sideboard, it's all part and parcel of the same thing—even this little picture of Stalin with the paper red poppy stuck behind the frame.... There *they* are... it was much easier for them. When *they* were disappointed, when somebody kicked *them* hard, *they* would hate and fight! Truth was clearly on their side. *They* always had somewhere to go, where they would find solace. *They* always had something in front of them. But what about me? Whom should I hate? The Party, my old man, or whom? And whom should I believe in?

Plenty of modern Western plays[10] and films are now to be seen in Prague. The foreign "kitchen sink" dramatists (Osborne, Wesker) are popular with the régime and the intellectuals, who see in them sharp criticism of capitalist society. But they are less popular with the public which spends too much of its own life around the kitchen sink, and goes to the theatre and cinema for "relaxation and amusement" rather than edification. Thus the ideal British film showing in Prague to-day is the *Doctor in the House* type (this, and its sequel, *Doctor at Large*, are now playing to packed houses). Agatha Christie is popular; *The Mousetrap* has had a great success. Noel Coward's *Nude with a Violin* is soon to be put on. Titles of other films showing while I was in Prague tell the same story: *Hell Drivers* (British), *Le Français et L'Amour* (French), *A Game Called Love* (Swedish), *Passion* (Italian). Films from the Eastern countries, however good they are—such as *The Cranes are Flying* (Russian) and *Alba Regia* (Hungarian)—play to half-full houses; while an Italian film like *The Last Paradise*, full of half-naked women, is an infallible money-maker.

Brigitte Bardot has, until now, been regarded as a vulgar Western sex-actress, and none of her films have been shown. But she has recently expressed herself in favour of "Algerian independence" and has received the honour of a newspaper

[10] A complaint which almost all Czech writers make is that it takes so long to get a book published—anything up to three years. There are five publishing houses: The Writers' Union; Belles Lettres; The Youth Movement; Scientific; Catholic. This is why many of them prefer to write plays. There is such a hunger for plays that work is put on the stage almost immediately it is written.

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article. In *Priboj* (29 January, 1962), in an interview, she freely gives her views on love and sex. I imagine her films will soon be exhibited.

THIS DESIRE for "Western trash" is very strong, and officialdom has almost given up trying to curb it. The restaurants are full of juke-boxes with American pop, and the wireless set in my hotel bedroom which I turned on at random emitted ninety per cent jazz and ten per cent classical music, Smetana, Janacek, etc. *Lidova Demokracie* reported (12 February): "Festivals of jazz orchestras, both amateur and professional, from Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, are to be held in Carlovy Vary towards the end of May." Answering readers' enquiries the same paper writes:

> The following dances are now taught in dancing classes throughout Czechoslovakia: the jive, charleston, blues, cha-cha, samba, mambo, etc. Adults as well as youngsters can enrol in dancing classes

I was told that in the days before 1955 when jazz was not allowed, youths used to tape-record it from Radio Luxembourg, a non-political station, and then pass it on to their friends. Faced with this, the régime has decided to give in.

A FOOTNOTE for Wolfenden: Homosexuality became legal in Czechoslovakia at the end of 1961. When I expressed my surprise that this is practised by Slavonic people, my informant became quite indignant. "Are you not aware," he said, "that we are the *most* Western, the *most civilised* of the Communist states . . . ?"

Anthony Rhodes

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LETTERS

Sartre

WRITING on Sartre (ENCOUNTER, April), Mr. Maurice Cranston asserts:

1. "From the collapse of the *R.D.R.* Sartre drew one lesson: that henceforth he must collaborate with the Communist Party, and this, without actually joining its ranks, he has *steadfastly* [my italics] done."
2. "Affirming the need for soiled hands in certain circumstances (for which a reasonable case can be made) Sartre has gone on to condone almost every act of bloodshed committed by Castro and Khrushchev and other avowed enemies of the bourgeoisie."

Politically, Sartre has not been entirely consistent. That is agreed. And it is equally true that he has frequently found himself, objectively, in sympathy with the policies of the Soviet Union and of the French Party. But while Mr. Cranston's first statement is misleading, the second gives a distinctly false, and almost libellous, impression of Sartre's political morality. Perhaps I may substantiate my criticisms.

1. Sartre never accepted the Stalinist line on Tito (see his introduction to Louis Dalmas' *Le Communisme Yougoslave*). In January 1950, after the collapse of the *R.D.R.*, he, with Maurice Merleau-Ponty, signed an article in *Les Temps Modernes* strongly attacking Communist intellectuals such as Pierre Daix and André Wurmser for their evasions and denials on the subject of Soviet Labour Camps. Moreover, the authors were convinced that a country in which one citizen in twenty has, or had been, in a camp could not claim to be socialist.

It was in *Les Communistes et la Paix* that Sartre came closest to the French Party, but even here he stressed that his purpose was to declare his agreement with the Communists on certain precise and defined subjects, reasoning on his own principles, and not necessarily on theirs. A writer "steadfastly collaborating" with the Party would surely have defended its line on the East European trials, on anti-semitism and on Tito. But Sartre did not.

Writing in February, 1956, before the anti-Stalinist line of the Twentieth Congress was known abroad, Sartre, while praising the Party's "extraordinary objective intelligence," criticised the sterility of the Party intellectuals, the lack of inner-Party democracy and the "brutal dogmatism" of Communists like M. Guy Besse. ("Le Réformisme et les fétiches," *Les Temps Modernes*.)

2. The most notable example of Mr. Khrushchev's bloodshed to date is, presumably, the suppression of the Hungarian revolution. Would it not be reasonable to infer from Mr. Cranston's second statement that Sartre "condoned" the Russian action? Or does the author's prudent insertion of the word "almost" (every act of bloodshed) leave him an escape hatch through which he can climb if challenged? If so, the tactics are less than honest.

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But one must assume ignorance on Mr. Cranston's part.

In fact, Sartre did not hesitate. November 9, 1956, *L'Express* published an interview in which he declared without equivocation: "I condemn entirely and without reservation the Soviet aggression." Although he felt that the Russian people were innocent of their government's "crime," he continued: "Regretfully I break entirely my links with my friends the Soviet writers who do not denounce (or cannot denounce) the massacre in Hungary." As for the French C.P., "its decisions today are entirely dictated by an apparatus totally infeudated to the most intransigent tendency of the Soviet government... with the men who at this time direct the P.C.F. it is not, it never would be possible to resume relations."

Two months later Sartre bitterly mocked the attitude of certain Communist intellectuals, such as Laurent Casanova and André Stil, in the face of the Hungarian revolution. (*Les Temps Modernes*, January 1957.) And need one add that he has never been immune from the attacks of the Party's most renowned polemicists, MM. Garaudy and Kanapa?

Cuba is another matter. With some reservations, Sartre has given Castro's revolution his blessing. This may show, as Mr. Cranston suggests, a "want of balanced insight" or it may be a case where *les mains sales* have been unavoidable. But one thing is certain: Sartre's view of the matter is not conditioned by any "steadfast collaboration" with the C.P. nor by any peculiarly indulgent view of blood shed by the enemies of the bourgeoisie.

DAVID CAUTE

All Souls College,
Oxford

I AM NOT convinced by Maurice Cranston's rejection of the "moral nihilism" of Sartre's "L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme." The issue is partly confused by a detour to enquire what Dostoievsky really meant when he wrote "If God did not exist everything would be permitted." In the present context the real issue is: what meaning did Sartre attach to this dictum and was this a valid starting point for a philosophy? Mr. Cranston's argument to the contrary is briefly that moral values do not depend on the existence of God; rather ethics are logically prior to theology. We cannot know God, it is held, until we have a conception of goodness, since God is defined by his moral qualities.

I would suggest two arguments to the contrary:

(1) God has not always been defined as "all good, all wise, all knowing." If there is any feature common to all concepts of God it is that of power.

(2) Cranston concedes Sartre's view that moral principles are not laid down by God, and that men create their own moral values for themselves. But it must follow that if moral values are merely human in origin they cannot enjoy the authority that would attach to ethical decrees of a divine origin. It may or may not be "a vulgar and unphilosophical error to... say that if there were no God there would be no moral values." But if there is no God and moral values are merely "based on decisions" made by people, morality loses its authority and becomes no more than the formalised choices and preferences of individuals or groups of individuals. This, I suggest, is why Sartre embraces Dostoievsky's view of the significance of atheism.

M. A. B. DEGENHARDT

Leatherhead,
Surrey

SARTRE *has* collaborated steadfastly with the Communist Party since the collapse of the R.D.R. I do not know why anyone should wish to deny it. Only recently he has promoted, with L. Schwartz and J.-P. Vigier, a movement for Left-wing unity with the idea of bringing together Communists and other anti-fascists in a common political front. Sartre gives an account of this in *France Observateur* (February 1, 1962). As for condoning bloodshed, let me quote one sentence from that same source: "For me," says Sartre, "the essential problem is to defeat the theory according to which the Left ought not to answer violence with violence." Note that he says: "the essential problem."

When I said that Sartre had condoned *almost* all acts of bloodshed committed by Castro and Khrushchev, I was not forgetting that Sartre had condemned the manner of the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956. Mr. Caute has no need charitably to assume ignorance on my part. I have written (if I may quote my own words) about Sartre's "vigorous protest against the Soviet action in Hungary" in a paperback book *Sartre*, lately published by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh (p. 88). Mr. Caute cites a few dramatic utterances from Sartre's interview with *L'Express* (November 9, 1956) *"Après Budapest."* But he leaves out some of the most important things Sartre said on that occasion. First, Sartre maintained that the Hungarian rebellion was Rightist in tendency. Hence, although there was no justification for the "brutal intervention," the "reappearance of the conservative parties" had "made the Russian *presence* in Hungary pretty well necessary." Secondly, although Sartre is bitterly critical in this interview of the Party "apparatus," his respect for the Party itself is, even in this most intense moment of what he calls his "anguish," sustained. The suggestion that Communist militants should show their disapproval of the Soviet crime in Hungary by leaving the Party and joining the Socialists, he dismisses as "a singular impudence." He proclaims his "entire sympathy" with those Communist militants—tortured with anguish as they are—who have no desire to quit the party when it is being attacked from all sides, and as a result of its own fault. Besides, so far as domestic policy is concerned, the policy of the C.P., for all its mistakes, "has been on the right lines." Thirdly, Sartre says *"après Budapest,"* what he has consistently said since 1952, that the French Left must create a new kind of Popular Front or be lost.

The exact rôle of Sartre as a steadfast collaborator with the Communists is that of the Candid Friend. His criticisms, belated as they were, of the Soviet camps, and the other things mentioned by Mr. Caute—these criticisms, together with the eccentric nature of Sartre's Marxism, serve publicly to certify

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his independence and impartiality. And this proof of independence makes Sartre—the world-famous author—very much more useful to the Communists than tin-pot intellectuals like Stil, Garaudy, and Kanapa, who are actually in the Party. In these years of de-Stalinisation, the old familiar slavish champions of the Party line are an embarrassment to Khrushchev. The Candid Friend, who has his own "Marxist philosophy," and is sometimes extremely critical, but who gives wholehearted public support to the *central objectives* of the Communists —he is of the utmost value.

Mr. Caute is not altogether tactful in quoting Sartre's saying: "I break entirely my links with my friends the Soviet writers who do not denounce (or cannot denounce) the massacre in Hungary." There is every indication that *that* hatchet has been buried. The *rapprochement* is mutual. I would like Mr. Caute to have been at the congress in Florence last month of the *Communità Europea degli Scrittori*; he would then have seen for himself how Sartre is *idolised* by Communists from both sides of the Iron Curtain; the passion with which Alexei Surkov and other non-denouncers of the massacre in Hungary championed the name of Sartre for vice-president of the Communità was, in a sense, moving and very revealing.

MAURICE CRANSTON

London

IN CONNECTION with the controversy between David Caute and Maurice Cranston on Sartre's politics, your readers will be interested in the following from a British correspondent's interview with Alexei Surkov, the Soviet Literary Commissar:

> "I asked Surkov to comment on the telegram sent to him by British writers on Pasternak's behalf.
>
> "He said: 'Yes, I have the telegram. I've also had telegrams from writers in France, Italy, and other countries. That Eliot should sympathise with Pasternak is natural, for he is a Catholic and a mystic. But several well-known foreign writers refused to protest—Sartre, for instance.'" (*News Chronicle*, 19th January, 1959.)

C. R.

Cambridge

Castro and Cuba

A Second Exchange between Matthews and Draper

I WAS VERY impressed with your letter, believe it or not, and naturally fascinated by what you wrote. I am glad you feel that we can argue this matter out with complete frankness and mutual respect. Since you have taken so much trouble in replying to me, I thought you would be interested in my keeping the correspondence going once more.

My argument about "a blue print" would apply to any such ratiocination of a volcanic historic development—for instance, the growing reliance of the Spanish Republican government on the Communists in the Civil War. As a journalist trying to follow the Cuban revolution from day to day, I found my own position shifting as I went along. I agree I also made some mistakes as I went along, which I tried to correct—but always with reference to what the situation was at the time.

I apologise for my implication about Batista but that was the way your article read to me. Perhaps you did not realise how what you wrote could be interpreted. Evidently I must plead guilty to the same thing in my own writings.

As for knowing Fidel, I continue to believe that this is of the first importance. Such things are relative. As I said in my book, Fidel is an enigma and always will be one. I feel I know him within such limits, because after January, 1959, I saw him at least a half-dozen times and always for hours on end—once all night and once all day. I also knew people in daily contact with him. He is a very mixed-up human being with greater limitations than I thought he had at first. But to me (and to my wife who also knows him as I do and applies a feminine psychology), he is a very different person from the one you depict.

I suppose our argument as to whether Fidel tricked or deceived is partly semantics. However, you implied that Fidel's intention was malicious; I believe it was tactical. I was annoyed at the way Fidel brought this up at the Overseas Press Club luncheon, but he has a childish streak in him and evidently could not resist. What is much more important is that there really were more people up in the Sierra Maestra than Fidel said. The forty men I said I was in contact with were around where I was. As I learned later, the Negro who became Commander of Oriente Province, Calixto Garcia, was in the Sierra at the same time I was there and he also was fighting with a group whose size I do not know. There had been skirmishes and this was not "poppycock." Moreover, you missed the importance of the resistance all through Oriente Province including the *guajiros* in the Sierra Maestra. I will never feel that I misled anyone by saying that Batista was "fighting a losing battle." On the contrary, I think it was a rare occasion on which I correctly grasped how a situation was going to develop.

In general you fall into the common trap of ascribing to me approval when I am merely describing. By the revolutionary standards of Fidel and his associates, Huber Matos was a traitor. This was revolutionary logic, and it would have been "logic" for, let us say, a Jacobin in the French revolution. This does not mean I approve of what Fidel did; on the contrary, I deplored it

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and all my sympathies were with Matos. I merely felt I understood why Fidel Castro acted the way he did. It is begging the question for you to argue now that this was an apology for "the Communist Revolution." I deny that there was a Communist revolution at that time.

In a different way you are simply making a good debating point in arguing that I was inconsistent to see the sense of putting Rafael Rodríguez at the head of I.N.R.A. and putting Felipe Pazos out of the National Bank. The cases and the reasons behind Fidel's move are not at all comparable. For instance, I argued that Fidel could trust Che to carry on the revolution. In the same way, he now feels he can trust Rodríguez. This is what I call revolutionary logic, even though I think it is too bad for Cuba. "The trained technicians and professional personnel" you mention were not "revolutionaries" by Fidel's standards. It was stupid to alienate them, as Fidel now admits, but it was not "illogical" from his point of view at the time.

I disagree with you that "the food crisis in Cuba was caused by the Communists and their servitors." It was due to incompetence and amateurishness, making a poor method that much worse.

I ARGUED in August, 1960, that the only hope of changing the situation lay with Fidel. No doubt it will surprise you to hear that I still say the same thing, although my hopes are dim indeed. In my opinion, this is still Fidel's revolution and, despite the Communist apparatus, the revolution would collapse overnight without him. He is a prisoner of his policies, of the forces he unleashed, and of the cold war—but do not underrate what he is capable of doing.

HERBERT L. MATTHEWS

New York Times

FOR ONCE, I think, something has been gained by trying to argue out deep and heated differences. It would not be fair, and it is not necessary, for me to answer you again at length. I am going to limit myself, therefore, to three remarks.

Your positions on Matos and Carlos Rafael suffer, to my mind, from a basic and pervasive confusion. The root of the problem in both cases, is: to *which* revolution was Matos a "traitor" and *which* revolution is Carlos Rafael serving? There is no such thing as "*the* Revolution." There are different revolutions, and some start as one thing and end as another. If Fidel feels that he can trust Carlos Rafael, the logic of the situation is "Communist," not merely "revolutionary." By making "revolution" and "Communist" interchangeable, or at least by sliding by the fact that they are not interchangeable, you objectively provide a "revolutionary" alibi for every step in the Communist take-over.

As for the responsibility for the food crisis, the question again is *whose* "incompetence and amateurishness"? The Communists and those who accept their leadership have held so many key positions in Cuba for so long that they cannot be absolved of the responsibility simply because another Communist has been appointed in a desperate effort to undo the damage.

Nor do I underrate Fidel. I don't think the Communists could have taken power without him. I quite agree that they would have enormous difficulties maintaining power without him. But neither can I admire him as much as you do. If he should find it necessary for whatever reason to part company with the Communists, what would it mean? That he had torn the country apart on behalf of them, and then could not even live with his own doing. And if he is still capable of freeing himself from them, as you seem to hint, he would need the very people like Matos and Pazos whom he has destroyed or driven out. Where would that leave your "logic of the Revolution"? Incidentally, you did not write that Batista was "fighting a losing battle." You wrote that he was "fighting a *thus-far* losing battle" (my emphasis).

So, I gather, we are still arguing. At least, I hope, others may be a little bit the wiser for it.

THEODORE DRAPER

New York City

Ilya Ehrenburg

I HAVE READ with great interest, though belatedly, the article by T. R. Fyvel on Mr. Ehrenburg [ENCOUNTER, December]. I suppose we can hardly complain if in writing his memoirs Mr. Ehrenburg only chooses to give us some of the truth. The spectacle of a modern Soviet author writing the truth at all is so novel and refreshing that perhaps we could content ourselves to apply the judgment of Dr. Johnson on another occasion, that while he does not do it very well, it is remarkable that he should do it at all.

Perhaps your readers might be interested to hear of one small incident from Mr. Ehrenburg's life which relates to the Spring of 1909 in Paris, when Ehrenburg was a very young man. He was also a very witty young man; and though nominally a Bolshevik, he does not seem to have allowed the intense seriousness of Bolshevism to interfere with his sense of humour. This was a time when Lenin was at the height of his campaign against A. A. Bogdanov along with Lunacharsky and Krasin, and indeed these three were, in the course of 1909, expelled from the Bolshevik faction. Ostensibly the matter of the dispute was a question of philosophy. In particular Bogdanov held views on sense perception inspired by Mach and Avenarius which pundits like Lenin and Plekhanov had long regarded as inconsistent with materialism. Fortunately I need not detain you with an analysis of the nature of sense perception in the light of orthodox materialism, because the real nature of the dispute, it is quite evident, related to the more practical question of money, and in particular to the disposal of funds which had been acquired by the Bolsheviks for their faction by means of armed hold-ups. It was around this time that Ehrenburg was editing a short-lived satirical journal appropriately called *The Quiet Family*. Lenin appropriately enough was the member of the quiet family who

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came in for the most satirical attacks. For example, the first issue carried the following notice.

> The philosophical circle of Comrade Lenin will shortly renew its activities. The following conditions are laid down for the admission of members to this circle:
> (1) A certificate of reliability;
> (2) A certificate of inoculation with anti-Bogdanov serum;
> (3) Personal examination by *himself* from all angles.
>
> Entrance free. It is requested that no dogs or empirio-monists should be brought to the circle.

This sense of humour, although it does Mr. Ehrenburg nothing but credit, was very much against Lenin's taste, and one of the members of the group recalls the arrival of Ehrenburg at the meeting with a packet of the first issue of his journal. The members read it with considerable amusement. Lenin, however, asked for a copy, looked at it and flung it aside, without saying a word, but with so powerful an expression of wrath that it caused a cloud to descend on the whole proceedings. Ehrenburg published a further two issues of his journal which continued to mock at Lenin's attacks on Bogdanov. The journal ceased publication after the third number and Ehrenburg ceased to attend meetings of the Bolshevik group. It is to the credit of the group, however, that Zinoviev's proposal that Ehrenburg should be expelled was not adopted. Those, of course, were the days when a little joke at the expense of the Bolsheviks did not necessarily lead to dire consequences. *On a changé tout cela*—as presumably no one knows better than Mr. Ehrenburg.

LEONARD SCHAPIRO

University of London

Sade

I FEEL I must raise my voice in protest against some misleading and mischievous remarks by Mr. Geoffrey Gorer in his artice on the Marquis de Sade, concerning our recently published book *The Marquis de Sade*, by Gilbert Lely.

Mr. Gorer says "A purported translation of this biography has recently been published in English. This represents something over a quarter of the French original . . . ." The implication of this statement is that the publishers have engaged in some disreputable surgical operation and have presented an English volume "purported" to be Gilbert Lely's work. This is what any reader would assume. However, the fact is that M. Lely himself prepared a special version of his book for foreign translations, and our volume is the exact English translation of this version. Editions in Italian and German of exactly the same length have also been published. So far, then, from deliberately mutilating a great work against the author's wishes, we, in common with other non-French publishers of the book in question, have only agreed with the author's views that his biography of the Marquis de Sade, as it appeared in the French original, would only be of limited appeal outside France, and acted accordingly by accepting for publication the altered and shortened version prepared by the author.

PAUL ELEK

Elek Books,
London

THE publishers' note, facing the list of contents, reads: "This work was originally published by Librairie Gallimard, Paris, in two volumes under the title *Vie du Marquis de Sade*." There is nothing to indicate to the prospective purchaser that he is not getting a full translation of this work. It therefore seems to me accurate to state that this is a purported translation. It would have been open to the publisher to state in this publisher's note, as he does in his letter, that the translation was a very considerable abbreviation, made in accordance with the author's wishes. Had this information been given, I would have replaced "purported" by "shortened."

GEOFFREY GORER

Haywards Heath,
Sussex

Afterthoughts on Regina v. Penguin Books Ltd.

John Sparrow's Reply

THE NINE MINUTES' wonder created by my article on the *Lady Chatterley* case has now subsided, and I myself no longer feel the desire to answer, one by one, the critics—angry, satirical, or merely contemptuous—who attacked it. None the less, I should like to set down a few afterthoughts about the controversy, and to remove, if I can, one or two misunderstandings on which some of the critics seem to have based their strictures.

TWO STRAINS PREDOMINATED in the loud chorus of dispraise: there were those who said that the interpretation that I put upon the disputed passage in the book was so obviously right that everyone had always accepted it, and that therefore my article was otiose; and there were those who insisted that I had not proved my case, some of them putting forward an alternative, "innocent," interpretation as being possibly, or even certainly, correct.

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The first semi-chorus was the louder, if not the larger, of the two; and, as the force of my demonstration made itself felt among readers, it recruited a number of deserters from the second—people who at first protested against the suggestion that my interpretation could be right, and then persuaded themselves that they had accepted it "all along." But there are still many people who question my reading of the passage, or positively support an alternative explanation. They include several of the "experts" who gave evidence in favour of the book, counsel (I believe) for the defence, and a number of those who wrote letters on the subject to ENCOUNTER (and to the *Spectator*), one of whom claimed that an explanation different from mine has "long been accepted by most 'normal' men and women." The existence of this considerable body of opinion seems in itself to be a sufficient answer to the first school of critics: an interpretation that was (and still is) so strongly challenged cannot be said to have been so obviously right as not to stand in need of demonstration.

That my article did demonstrate its correctness I have no doubt. I can only refer those who question this to the argument leading up to my conclusion; not one of the critics who disputed that conclusion has even attempted to pick a hole in the *nexus* of reasoning by which it was reached.[1] The clues planted by Lawrence in the text point unequivocally to one interpretation, and though he did not make his meaning obvious, he must have intended serious readers so to understand it.

A WEIGHTIER CRITICISM came from others: "Granted," they said, "that you proved your thesis; granted that Lawrence did not make his meaning plain; still, your article was superfluous because it concerned a question of no importance. What does it matter exactly what happened on the 'night of sensual passion?' It is absurd—indeed, it is deplorable—to focus attention on such physical details."

I cannot help thinking that many of those who took this line were influenced more deeply than they would have cared to admit—more deeply, perhaps, than they themselves recognised—by the nature of the question at issue. What they really meant, I suspect, was not "The question is an unimportant one, and therefore it was not worth your while to raise it," but "The question is an unpleasant one, and therefore we should be much more comfortable if you had left it alone."[2]

I sympathise with this reluctance to approach the matter, but I do not think that one should yield to it: those who care for literature and value truth ought not to shirk discussion of an important question, or to minimise its importance, simply because they find it "difficult" or unpleasant.

Still, the criticism, whatever actuated it, demands an answer. Was the question, after all, important enough to justify its being made the subject of an inquiry that shocked the feelings of many decent people?

That the "night of sensual passion" is an important episode in the novel can hardly be denied. Those witnesses were right who insisted at the trial that each of the "sexual encounters" was inserted by Lawrence with a special purpose, and this particular one occupies a crucial place both in the account of the heroine's relations with her lover and in the development of the main theme in the book—her gradually increasing awareness of the full meaning and possibilities of sex. Lawrence makes this clear both by his description of her feelings during that "sensual" night and by his account of her subsequent recollections of it. Plainly the episode, however it is to be interpreted, is of prime importance in the book.

But how much does it matter what the true interpretation of it is? This is never a simple question when asked about something in a work of fiction. The query may have an aesthetic intention: How much does our appreciation of the passage depend upon our understanding precisely what the author meant by it? Or, if the work has a "message," it may mean "How far does our understanding of the author's general intention depend upon our interpreting this feature of it correctly?" And, if the message is a controversial one, the question may have a practical significance: How far (it may mean) would our opinion (or the general opinion) of the author himself be affected by a new light thrown upon the meaning of what he wrote?[3]

In the present case it is impossible to keep these questions wholly separate. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is something more than a novel. It is, in large part, a series of poetical passages describing, or attempting to convey in words, the sensations accompanying the sexual act. It is also a tract, in which Lawrence (as his letters show) intended to convey, more frankly than he had ever done before, his most mature views upon the subject of sex. These elements in the book do not (I think) hold together, and Lawrence's failure to make them coalesce in a way that satisfies the reader is (or so it seems to me) one of the reasons, but not the only one, for the failure of the book as a work of art. Yet these elements cannot be judged apart from each other: both the poetry and the story are intended to illustrate and to bring home to the reader the validity of Lawrence's sexual doctrine.

[1] Several critics have (no doubt innocently) misrepresented my argument by suggesting that I relied on references in Lawrence's text to "Greek vases" and to the works of Abelard. These ambiguous references prove nothing, and they formed no link in my chain of reasoning. (I may add that the reference to Cellini, though unequivocal, does not, as some have supposed, of itself prove the case; what is decisive is that reference taken in conjunction with Lady Chatterley's reception of the letter that contained it.)

[2] I suspect also that many who challenged the correctness of my interpretation were, likewise, swayed less by reason than by a natural reluctance to admit the truth of a theory that they found repugnant.

[3] It is instructive to consider, in the light of the above, the importance of ascertaining the correct answer to the following questions: Was Hamlet "really" mad? Was Hamlet dark or fair? Were some of the sonnets in which Shakespeare expressed intense physical passion addressed to a young man?

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One of the principal theses in Lawrence's doctrine is the necessity, in a completely "valid" sexual relationship between a man and a woman, of two elements: "tenderness" on the one hand and on the other a "fiery," cruel, sensuality that demands on the part of the woman complete submission and an entire absence of sexual shame. Lawrence described the "night of sensual passion," and gave it a climactic position both in his story and in the development of his theme, in order to bring home to his readers the importance of the second of these two elements. And this the episode fails to do unless it is understood as Lawrence intended it to be. He is deliberately and definitely challenging convention on this point, and the challenge fails to "register" if the episode is given an "innocent" explanation—if it is assumed that nothing "unnatural" was intended—that it is merely a trivial question of a variation of posture.

If we are to judge the importance of a right understanding of the episode by reference to the author's intention, we can only say that Lawrence would have scornfully rejected the well-meant efforts of his present-day defenders to play down its significance or to provide him with an "innocent" explanation of it.[4]

Of course the full value of a piece of poetical writing, whether in prose or verse, often does not depend at all upon a precise realisation of what it describes; indeed, a too precise realisation may ruin its effectiveness. Of nothing is this truer than the description of physical passion, which is best conveyed not by giving details, nor by "leaving them to the imagination," but by so satisfying the imagination that it does not ask for them—*"Non è lecito,"* says the narrator, at just such a point in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's *Lighea, "non sarebbe d'altronde pietoso verso di te, entrare in particolari. . . . Ripensa a quanto Balzac non ha osato esprimere nella 'Passion dans le désert'."* Balzac's silence at the climax of his superb story was not (as *"osato"* suggests) due to a failure of nerve; it was simply that his art was so delicate that he did not need to say more. Lawrence, who was trying to combine a poem with a tract, evidently felt the need, for the tract's sake, to make his meaning precise, and yet could not bring himself to be unambiguous. Hence (in Mr. Shonfield's words) the "strident ejaculatory writing" at this point, "which is of outstanding badness even among the long passages of girl's gush writing that the book contains." It is not that Lawrence does not say enough; he says too much, and yet, as Mr. Shonfield concludes, "he manages to mask and muff, if not to conceal entirely, his essential message."[5]

Other writers confirm my estimate of the importance attached by Lawrence to this particular perversion as an element in a full sexual relationship between a man and a woman.[6]

In an article "Lawrence, Joyce, and Powys" in *Essays in Criticism*, October, 1961 (which I did not see until my own essay was in proof) Professor G. Wilson Knight maintains that the "night of sensual passion" provides the fullest evidence of an obsession on Lawrence's part to which several of his poems also bear witness; he traces the development of this obsession through *Women in Love* and to a climax in *Lady Chatterley*, and seeks to illumine it by a *pot pourri* of references to the "posterior locations" (as he calls them) drawn from the unbridled sexual fantasies of *Ulysses*. The passages that Professor Knight quotes from Joyce will not, I think, bear the weight he seeks

[4] Here I must again call attention to the passage in which Duncan Forbes utters his tirade (so often quoted, and so often attributed to Mellors) about conventional society and sex: "You'll see, they'll hound that man down. And what's he done after all? If he's made love to his wife all ends on, hasn't he a right to? She ought to be proud of it." It was this passage that I had in mind when I said in my article that "Lawrence weaves into the story not merely a defence but a panegyric of this practice"—a sentence quoted by Mr. Stephen Potter to show that I was guilty of the "generalisation" that "Lawrence 'is' Mellors, and does what he does. Of course I did not mean to identify Lawrence with Mellors, or suggest that one can argue from anything in the book to Lawrence's practice, as distinct from his opinions. But that these words of Forbes do express Lawrence's opinion has been generally, and no doubt rightly, accepted (for instance, by Mr. Raymond Williams in his evidence at the trial); what people have not appreciated is that it was to the "crucial" episode, and nothing else, that Forbes was referring—and the context leaves us in no doubt about how he interpreted it.

[5] Of course it was not my intention to suggest that Lawrence ought here, in order to make his meaning plain, to have descended to crude or clinical details. In so far as my language suggested that he did so elsewhere in the novel, the point made by Mr. David Sylvester in his letter to Encounter was a good one. But it remains true that Lawrence's boasted "frankness" broke down at this point.

[6] Several critics said that my article was superfluous because its contents had been anticipated by Professor Knight and Mr. Shonfield; but neither of their articles covered quite the same ground as my own. Professor Knight took for granted the disputed interpretation, and Mr. Shonfield merely said that its truth was "a reasonable guess"; neither attempted to prove it in a manner that could convince the sceptical, and neither dealt with it in relation to the evidence and the verdict in the Old Bailey proceedings.

Since importance seems to be attached to "priority" in the matter, I may point out that Professor Knight and Mr. Shonfield were themselves anticipated by the author of a long review, in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 4 August, 1961, of the Penguin account of the trial. That review drew attention not only to the "anal obsession" so evident in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* but also to the care Lawrence seems to have taken both to make his meaning unequivocal and to veil it from the casual reader. Anonymity is the rule of the *Literary Supplement*, so the author of the review may not be named; but I may say that the views he expressed agree exactly with my own.

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to put upon them; nor, it seems to me, do his quotations from J. C. Powys help to elucidate the dark places in Lawrence.[7] But what does emerge from his curious gallimaufry is the importance of the part played in Lawrence's "sexual ethic" by this particular kind of perversion.

The importance of this feature in Lawrence's "ethic" is also asserted, more concisely and more authoritatively, by Eliseo Vivas in *D. H. Lawrence: the failure and triumph of art* (Allen & Unwin, November, 1961).[8] In his chapter on *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Professor Vivas says that the references to "the Italian way" reveal the "love-ethic" of Lawrence, and that they indicate "practices that Lawrence and his admirers agree are essential to burn out 'the deepest, oldest shames, in the most secret places'." "Not only have those critics who admire Lawrence's love-ethic ignored or overlooked all that it involves," says Professor Vivas, "but they have not observed how radical is the transvaluation of values that he advocates." To this "radical transvaluation" the right interpretation of the crucial passage provides a necessary key.

SEVERAL CRITICS WERE MADE VERY ANGRY by my suggestion that a true understanding of the passage was of practical as well as intrinsic importance. I ventured to say that if its meaning had been put squarely to those of the experts at the trial who had not really understood it—clergymen, professors and lecturers in literature, heads of schools and colleges[9]—and if its significance had thus been brought home to the jury, it might have affected the judgment that both witnesses and jury passed upon the work. I still think that this is true, and I suspect that the critics were angry not because they were convinced that I was wrong in holding this opinion, but because they were afraid that I was right.

I did not impute deliberate bad faith to the witnesses or any sort of impropriety to counsel; and this was not out of caution, but because I sincerely believed in their honesty. But I felt (and I still feel) that many of the witnesses, in their anxiety to vindicate their own high-mindedness and broad-mindedness, and in their eagerness to strike a blow for liberty and literature, allowed themselves to give a false account of Lawrence's sexual ethic as revealed in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*,[10] and that the trial was in consequence largely a display of shadow-boxing and the verdict something of a mockery. And, looking back on it, I sympathise less with the *bien pensant* progressives, who were indignant at not being allowed to get away unchallenged with a questionable victory, than with the correspondent who said in ENCOUNTER that it would have been "cleaner and saner in the long run" to let the novel be judged for what it was.

IN POINTING OUT the unsatisfactory features of the trial I was not intending, of course, to suggest that the case should be retried. No one knew better than I that that was out of the question, and I should have deplored, even if it had been legally possible, any attempt to re-open the matter judicially.[11] Indeed, though I think that the verdict might very probably have been a different one had the true meaning of the passage been brought home to the jury, I am very doubtful whether they *ought* to have been so affected by it; that is a different question, and a more difficult one to answer. I should myself be inclined to agree with the correspondent who said in ENCOUNTER that Lawrence's

[7] Professor Knight's invocation of one author to explain another seems to me unhelpful—as when, for instance, he says that a reference to "animality" in Joyce "lends point" to Lawrence's "phallic hunting-out" in *Lady Chatterley*, and adds that "Joyce's concentrations may be compared with the back view of a man's agonisingly beautiful body in *Women in Love*, and with the yet greater insistence on the arsenerastic, replacing vague terms such as 'loins' with a more precise terminology, throughout *Lady Chatterley's Lover*." What meaning—or indeed what derivation—the Professor attributes to his word "arsenerastic" is not made clear by the dozen page-references to the novel appended by him at this point.

[8] My attention was first drawn to this book after my own article had been published.

[9] I was criticised for generally challenging the *expertise* of the witnesses; in fact, I limited my criticism to "some" of them, instancing two who were put forward by the defence as literary experts but plainly had no qualifications as such. Of the others, some were certainly literary experts; but many, though distinguished in various walks of life, do not seem to me to have been in any way fitted to pronounce authoritatively on the merits of the book. They may have been qualified to judge of the likelihood of its corrupting its readers, young or old, and most of what they said in Court was directed to that question; but that is not a question upon which the Act allows expert evidence to be offered.

[10] In particular, some of the witnesses grossly misinterpreted Mellors' panegyric of "chastity" and his attack on "wearisome philandering" in the closing paragraphs of the book. Chastity, for Mellors, was simply "the peace that comes of" copulation (he used a shorter word), and by "philandering" he did not mean going from one woman to another for sexual satisfaction—that had been his own practice, as his heartless recital of his amours (*L.C.*, pp. 208–12) reveals—he meant making love without "sex." Here, and on p. 264, Lawrence's characters are a mouthpiece for his own doctrine: "Love is chiefly bunk; an over-exaggeration of the spiritual and individualistic and analytic side"; he was preoccupied with what Dr. Leavis has called "human mating."

[11] In drawing attention to the possibility of a new trial on the common law charge of public mischief (as distinct from a retrial under the Obscene Publications Act, 1959), I was careful to say that that possibility was only theoretical. It would have been quite out of the question in practice for such a prosecution to be launched after the prosecution under the Statute had failed. I observed, however, that had the original prosecution included the charge of an offence against public decency, it might well have had a better chance of success, and this I think is true.

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account of the "night of sensual passion" was not likely to encourage his readers, if they understood it, to indulge in the practice it describes, and that therefore the possibility of its being correctly interpreted did not increase the likelihood of the book's "corrupting" its readers.[12]

WHAT I HAVE SO FAR SAID leaves unanswered what to many will seem the most important question concerning the trial: was the verdict on the book taken as a whole a right one? Much of the critics' rancour was due, I think, to the belief that my article constituted an attack on the verdict that vindicated *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and on the Act that, in effect, legalised its publication. One correspondent challenged me to say whether I deplored the verdict, and another suggested that in not stating my own views on censorship I was myself guilty of the evasiveness that I imputed to Lawrence.

My main reason for not declaring my views on these questions was that the rightness or wrongness of the verdict was irrelevant to the point I was seeking to make, and still less relevant was my own opinion on the wider questions concerning censorship and morals that lay on or beneath the surface of the case. Nor had I any decided opinion upon these questions to declare. They seem to me to be very difficult to answer; and the fact that ENCOUNTER's correspondents, and most of the witnesses at the trial, found them easy, does nothing to decrease my own uncertainty about them—for the answers that they so confidently advanced were full of contradictions. Some of them were opposed to any censorship at all; others, including several of the witnesses who spoke out most loudly against the suppression of *Lady Chatterley*, were clear that "pornography" should be suppressed by law. But why pornography should be suppressed, how it should be defined, and how in a given case it should be decided whether a work is pornographic—on these questions the critics were quite unable to agree.

I am not myself so confident as they: all I can say is that if there is to be a law imposing censorship, the Jenkins Act seems to me to be not a bad one, and an improvement on the law as it stood before its passing. But I am inclined to think that the real, if unconscious, motive behind public approval of the censor's activities is a feeling that the law ought not to permit the general distribution of what is generally thought to be outrageously indecent; and it seems to me that this affords a sounder basis for censorship than a desire that the law should protect public morals in this field. Since, however, the Act of 1959 is not concerned with public decency, the possible application of such a doctrine to *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was not before the Court.

[12] If the book had been tried like (*The Ladies Directory*) for the common law offence of indecency, as well as (or instead of) under the Act of 1959, I should say that the true meaning of the passage was so veiled that its latent significance did not constitute an affront to decency.

How I should have voted if I had been on the jury at the Old Bailey I do not know. But I may say that I found much that was ridiculous and (in different ways) repugnant to me both in the book and in the evidence given on its behalf; that I do not think it is if great value as a work of literature, or that it is necessary to have read it in order to appreciate the body of work that Lawrence produced before he wrote it; and that it seems to me from every point of view a pity that Penguin Books should have launched it on the public at three shillings and sixpence a copy.

THE DEBATE WAS RAISED to a higher level by the most eloquent and the most sympathetic of my critics, Mr. Colin MacInnes. Sympathetic, not because he sympathised with me—far from it!—but because I found in his protests much with which I myself could sympathise. Mr. MacInnes wrote with a passionate concern to vindicate freedom in life and art against the distortions of puritanism and the dead hand of the law. He excoriated the Old Bailey witnesses, in language far more scathing than any used by me, not for what they said, or failed to say, in evidence, but for taking any part at all in what he called "the hateful trial." They "dishonoured Lawrence," in his view, as much by their defence of him as did the prosecution by its attack. The verdict, so far from being the victory claimed by Penguin Books for light over darkness, did much more harm than good, for it meant that, instead of hundreds, millions would thenceforth buy the novel as a "dirty book." As for my article, by drawing attention to "an irrelevance," it increased the book's attraction for the prurient and provided another stone for the Puritans to throw at Lawrence's reputation.

Mr. MacInnes accepted my interpretation of the disputed passage—but what (he asked, in effect) does it matter how it is interpreted? And what does it matter whether the verdict would have been affected by a fuller understanding of it? Of what importance was the verdict, anyhow? Art, or at least great Art, should be outside the range of the law, and "laws seeking to govern literary truth [whatever that may mean] are totally to be mistrusted." The Act of 1959, so far from having improved the law by allowing artistic merit, at least in some cases, to save a work from suppression, was a step in the wrong direction because it brought within the range of the law something that properly lay outside it.

Of course, behind all this, muddled though it is, there is a feeling with which one cannot fail to sympathise. It goes against the grain to take a line that may seem to mark one as unfriendly to the Arts or to the liberty of the individual. And I suspect that the Arts—though I do not care to rave about them in print—mean as much to me as they do to Mr. MacInnes, and that my views on sexual morality differ less from his than he supposes. But his enthusiasm betrays him into a number of judgments that seem to me disputable or plainly indefensible. So far as they directly concern Lawrence and his work, I shall not attempt

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to answer them—indeed, it would be waste of time for me to do so: "Who cares," asks Mr. MacInnes, "if dons, barristers, and pedants make idiots of themselves when they speak and write of art? That is what they are for." This neatly lists my own disqualifications, and I will not offer opinions that have been discounted in advance as idiotic. But Mr. MacInnes must surely recognise that the general position from which he chooses to launch his attack upon my article cannot be rationally defended. He claims that Art, or "great" Art, or Art produced by writers "of the quality of" Lawrence or writers with "Lawrence's gifts and intentions," should be above the law. But someone must determine whether a challenged work is 'Art" or "great Art," or Art "of the quality" that entitles it to exemption—and to whom is that function to be entrusted?

Art is in a sense, it is true, above and beyond the law; no Act of Parliament can (in Mr. MacInnes' phrase) "govern literary truth" or control the artistic imagination. But artists live in the same world as ordinary men, and the artist cannot claim exemption from the laws that regulate society. Those who care for Art and feel for the artist, and want to improve his position under the law, will probably in the long run help him better by facing the facts involved in claims made on his behalf than by evading or concealing those of them that seem "unpleasant," like so many of the witnesses in the present case, or by attempting, like Mr. MacInnes, to "contract out" completely.[13]

Babylon, Babylone

IN concluding his erudite *Babylon, Babylone* (ENCOUNTER, May), Mr. Richard Wollheim asks whether young TV watchers have solved the problem of living in London any better than MacInnes's hero, "or, for that matter, Fyvel's villain."

While honoured at this reference in Mr. Wollheim's peroration, I feel it may be unwittingly misleading, since already the title of my book *The Insecure Offenders* surely indicates that I was writing not of villains but of social victims.

T. R. FYVEL

London

[13] I have left for a footnote the unkindest cricicism of all: several correspondents declared that my article showed that its author was entirely lacking in a sense of humour. To this charge—though none more wounding can be brought against an Englishman—I can only enter a plea of guilty; indeed, it is a charge on which I could hardly hope to be acquitted, seeing that two of our most successful professional humorists are among my critics. But there is nothing that, at my age, I can do about this; and when I confess that, reading Mr. Osbert Lancaster's epigram—so obviously humorous in its intention—I was unable to raise a smile, and that I suffered no such incapacity as I perused the solemn protestations of Mr. Stephen Potter, I shall only be taken, I am afraid, to have given a fresh proof of my unfortunate inability to distinguish between what is ridiculous and what is not.

AUTHORS

W. H. Walsh is Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of Edinburgh, and is the author of *An Introduction to Philosophy of History* (1951). He is also an editor of *History and Theory*....

Philip Rieff is Professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, author of *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist* (Gollancz). His earlier academic appointments include the University of California (at Berkeley), Harvard, Brandeis, and the University of Chicago. In 1959 he was Fulbright Professor of Sociology at Munich....

Maurice Cranston, whose article on Jean-Paul Sartre appeared in our April number, has just published his book *Sartre* (5s.) in Oliver and Boyd's Writers and Critics paperback series.

Luigi Barzini is the son of the celebrated editor of the *Corriere Della Sera*, in which his own articles frequently appear. He is the author of a book on the United States (*Americans Are Alone In the World*) and ENCOUNTER has already published the following contributions from him: *Island of Memories: Life on Formosa To-day* (October, 1955); *Italy and its Aristocracy* (January, 1956); *Letter From Rome: the Italian Bureaucracy* (June, 1956); *On the Isle of Capri* (October, 1959); and *Curzio Malaparte* (August, 1960).

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